MAY 4
1943

NEW MASSES

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AMBITIOUS MR. DEWEY

by SIMON W. GERSON

COMMUNISTS AND THE BRITISH LABOR PARTY

R. PALME DUTT surveys the proposals for affiliation

THE STATE DEPARTMENT VS. FRENCH UNITY

by JOSEPH STAROBIN

THE POLISH-SOVIET BREAK

by THE EDITORS

UNDERMINING THE FEPC

by JOHN BEECHER

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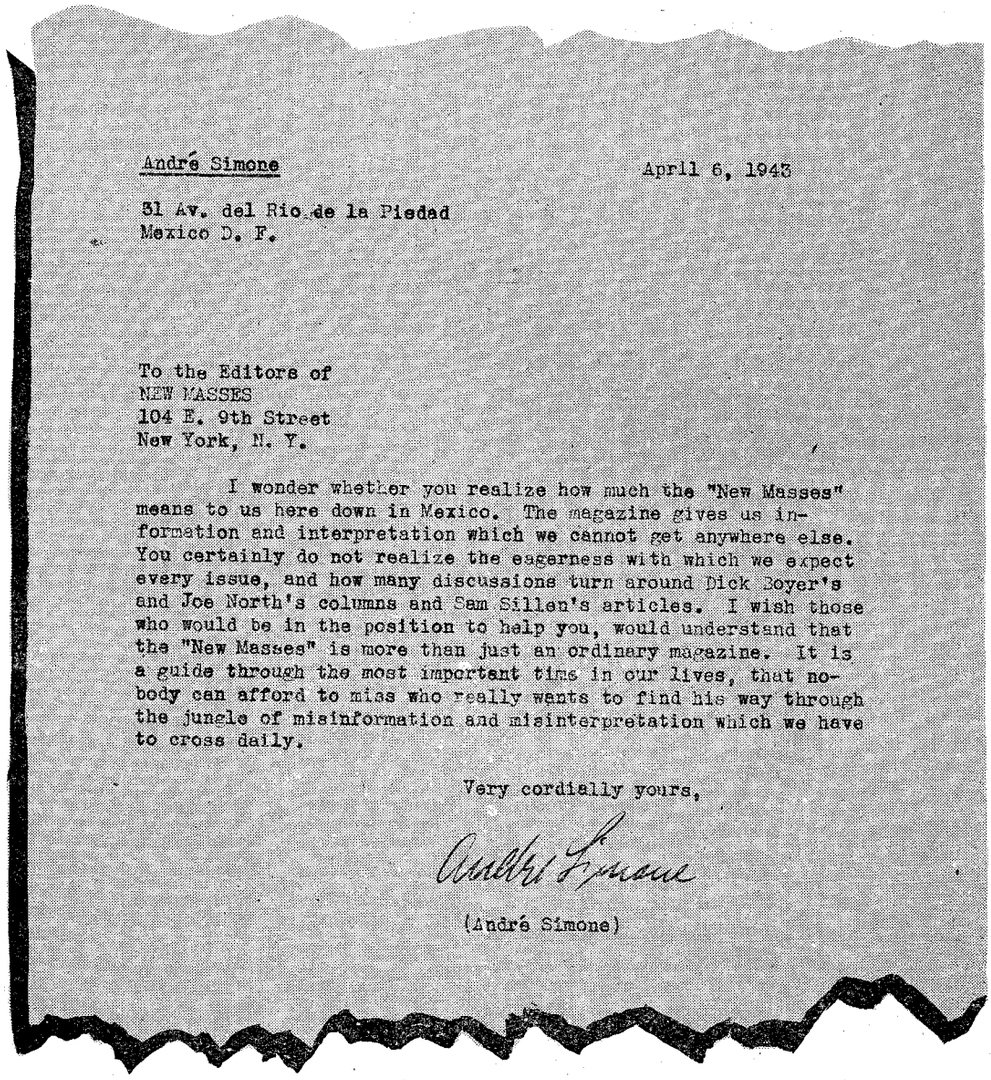
THOSE WHO FELT HITLER'S WHIPLASH . . .

Many world-famous anti-Nazi German refugees are living today in Mexico City. They include Egon Erwin Kisch, one of the leading newspapermen of pre-Hitler Europe; Anna Seghers, author of *The Seventh Cross*; Ludwig Renn, author of *War and After War;* Andre Simone, author of *Men of Europe;* and many others. Last week we received the following letter:



André Simone

April 6, 1943

31 Av. del Rio de la Piedad
Mexico D. F.

To the Editors of
NEW MASSES
104 E. 9th Street
New York, N. Y.

I wonder whether you realize how much the "New Masses" means to us here down in Mexico. The magazine gives us information and interpretation which we cannot get anywhere else. You certainly do not realize the eagerness with which we expect every issue, and how many discussions turn around Dick Boyer's and Joe North's columns and Sam Sillen's articles. I wish those who would be in the position to help you, would understand that the "New Masses" is more than just an ordinary magazine. It is a guide through the most important time in our lives, that nobody can afford to miss who really wants to find his way through the jungle of misinformation and misinterpretation which we have to cross daily.

Very cordially yours,

André Simone

(André Simone)

We've received similar letters from Latin America, China, Great Britain, from all over the world. Why? Because the magazine symbolizes the aspirations of millions who want a free world, and who, therefore, agree with what we have to say.

For these reasons, NM must live. But it is precariously near the abyss. We believe we have an obligation to keep it alive. It is our duty—and yours.

As you know, NM needs $22,795 more to cover the $40,000 necessary to survive. Do you want it to survive? If your answer is "yes," let us hear from you at once.

The Editors.

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NM SPOTLIGHT

Frontlines

As THE general assault on the intrenched camp around Tunis and Bizerte is beginning to develop, we note with pride that General Patton's American Second Army Corps has taken its place in the line of attacking formations. Patton's "ironsides" made a concealed march "in high" (which for mechanized troops should be the equivalent of "double-quick") from the southern sector to the north and have now been assigned to the important sector before Mateur, toward which they are reported to be advancing, while on their left General Anderson's British regiments are advancing on Tebourba.

Further to the south the French are attaking in the Pont-du-Fahs direction, while General Montgomery's Eighth Army is keeping up steady pressure at the bottom of the "sack," pressing forward from Enfidaville toward the Axis defense line which lies in the mountains between Zaghouan and Hammamet.

At this writing General Patton's American troops appear to be the nearest to either of the two main objectives, Tunis and Bizerte—only some twenty-eight miles from the latter.

Despite terrific losses inflicted by Allied fliers on Axis air transports as well as on Axis shipping in the Straits of Sicily, it has been announced that about one-half of the sea- and air-craft sent by Hitler to von Arnim is reaching its destination. However, as Allied air power demolishes the few airdromes left to the Axis in Tunisia, air reinforcements from Germany will have increasing difficulty getting through and pretty soon the defenders of Tunis and Bizerte will have to stand and fight without looking for help. Judging by developments, the show ought to be over by June 1, at the latest; barring, of course, a strategic Axis counter-blow through Morocco or elsewhere. It is rather late for that, but still possible.

One fundamental consideration points to the improbability of such an Axis move: the German High Command knows very well that the Red Army is its most dangerous enemy—militarily, because it is able to "absorb" and hold ninety percent of the Wehrmacht; and politically, because no compromises and negotiations with the Soviet government are possible. Because of that the Germans will concentrate all they can muster for another throw of the dice for a strategic decision in the East, probably on both the Leningrad and Caucasus fronts. They will keep, relatively speaking, only a "corporal's guard" on land and in the air in Europe.

THE tension between Germany and Sweden, the increasing tension (at last!) between Finland and the United States, and the steady bombing by the Russians of East Prussia's key centers seem to indicate that events are brewing in the basin of the Eastern Baltic. Such events might take the shape of a German stab at Tikhvin and Vologda in order to sever the Murmansk supply line at its root. This would involve a stab in depth equivalent to about two-thirds of last year's march from Kupyansk to Stalingrad.

The Germans, it is now clear, did launch a real offensive against the Donets and Lower Kuban Soviet fronts, but have failed to budge the defenders an inch. During the last few days, we learn, they have tried a big tank stab in the Kursk region, but have also failed. However, all these operations were but preliminaries and the big stuff is still to come. The Germans have no other choice left: they must bid for a decision in the East.

Aside from a push along a narrow front in the North, the enemy will probably throw his main might into a new push to capture the oil of the Caucasus, render the Soviet Black Sea Fleet "homeless" by trying to reach Poti and Batum, and then move across Transcaucasia to Baku. We don't expect the Germans to be successful, but such an attempt is definitely in the cards.

Finland Fights Us

IF WE are not the victims of an outpouring of Stockholm rumors, it may well be that by the time this issue of NEW MASSES comes to the reader the State Department will have broken relations with Finland. Such action would be logical after the evacuation of most of our legation officials from Helsinki. But there is many a slip twixt the cup and the lip. And all we can do is fervently hope that the days of diplomatic attrition are over and that we will now take the belated step of declaring war on Hitler's northern vassal. The illusion that Finland could or would act independently of Berlin is becoming apparent even to those suffering from political conjunctivitis. Helsinki has willingly joined in with the Wilhelmstrasse's plans to create a hostile atmosphere between Washington and Moscow over so-called peace offers in which the State Department takes the role of intermediary. It should by now be clear that no peace is possible unless the Finnish people with one big push send the Mannerheim-dominated

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government crashing to the ground, rid the country of the Wehrmacht, and withdraw their troops from positions on the Eastern Front. A war of nerves with Finland, no matter how well plotted and executed by Washington, is interpreted by the Axis as weakness on our part. Our convoys are being bombed by Nazi planes based in Finland; Finland has been fighting our Soviet ally whose defense our officials have time and again said is vital to our defense. In effect Finland has been at war with us. It is high time we replied in kind.

Neighbors and Allies

THE reverberations of President Roosevelt's cordial exchange with President Camacho will reach down to the tip of the Hemisphere, lending new zest and spirit to the policy of neighborliness. Mr. Wallace has already witnessed the eagerness with which the republics to the south—with the lamentable exception of Argentina—desire to fulfill their share in the prosecution of the war. The dams which halt the flow of Latin-American energy and power will be breached in large part by our President's promise that the day of exploitation is a thing of an unhappy past. It now remains for these assurances to become the dominating reality of all our relations.

Mexico is almost a classic model of what ruin and wreckage accrued from the practices of American dollar diplomacy. To this very day there is a residue of suspicion of our motives, distrust of finely phrased words behind which imperialism starved Latin American workers and enslaved their economies. But it marks a great stride forward when the President of Mexico can view American armed might, as he did at Corpus Christi, and not fear that it may some day threaten the sovereignty of his people. And in assessing our relations with Mexico, the responsibility for improvement rests primarily on our shoulders. The State Department's attitude toward Spain, for example, has dismayed Latin American democrats who see Franco's falangists undermining their national existence without a word of reprimand from Washington. We might with ease and grace adopt the Mexican President's hospitality toward Spanish refugees and toward all those republican fighters now in exile. We might instruct Mr. Messersmith, our envoy in Mexico City, to cooperate in the extermination of Franco's termites instead of maintaining a position of indifference. For the fact is that the Good Neighbor policy has found its most active enemies in these Franco-Nazi inspired cabals.

MOREOVER, it is incumbent upon us to help Mexico evolve her war economy without in any way circumscribing her independence. Mexican exports have been

President Avila Camacho

coming into the United States at prices which do not permit the Mexican worker to live at a decent level of comfort or security. Food prices have skyrocketed and wages have not even begun to keep pace with them. The recent congress of the Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM) devoted a good deal of its time to measures for stopping the epidemic of speculation and hoarding which ever since Mexico entered the war has virtually brought thousands of workers to the brink of starvation. The irony of this state of affairs comes from the fact that Mexican food production has increased more than ever before. Until there is more extensive planning of Mexico's war effort with the assistance of Washington, the Mexican fifth column will continue to exploit the food shortage and the inflated cost of living with the half-truth that foodstuffs are being brought to this country without concern for the interests of Mexicans. This is but one of the problems which the policy of the good neighbor can effectively solve. There are other problems of economic adjustment, true not only of Mexico but of all Latin America, which will test our intentions of hemisphere unity both in the war and postwar periods.

Hangmen East and West

AMERICA was horror-struck by the news last week that some of the courageous men in General Doolittle's bombing force that raided Tokyo, Yokohama, and Kobe had been brutally executed by their captors. We were horrified—but we were not stunned. America reacted with the unalterable pledge to achieve final, complete victory. Our commanders, soldiers, people at home pledged vengeance—not of a reciprocated cruelty, for such methods are far removed from the qualities of our fighters, but a vengeance that spells the unqualified destruction of barbarism.

But the news of the execution could hardly have surprised those who have followed the type of warfare waged by the enemy in both the Far East and Europe. Our Chinese allies have felt the uninhibited depravity of the Japanese aggressor for six frightful years. Until the Nazi killers set new precedents for mass torture and murder of entire populations, nothing in history had yet surpassed the revolting behavior of the Mikado's troops in China's occupied capital, Nanking. The utter cruelty of the Japanese in China and of the Nazis in the Soviet Union, in Poland, wherever they are—including Germany itself—is an integral quality of a system which is attempting to brutalize the entire world. It has struck some of our own heroes; it will strike more. We will have to contend with it until the system itself has been eliminated.

Before us is the recent statement of the Extraordinary State Committee of the USSR on the crimes committed by the German fascist invaders in the towns of Vyazma, Gzhatsk, Sychevka, and Rzhev. It cites acts of cruelty of a degree and extent almost beyond the grasp of man's imagination. "History," the statement says, "has never before witnessed such mass extermination of human beings. . . . The German army, brought up by Hitler, torments and murders all those whom the Germans do not need, while those who can work for them they carry like cattle to slave markets in Germany. . . ."

The torture and execution of our brave airmen in Japan must not be permitted to divert our attention from the main foe, Hitler. On the contrary, it binds us more closely to our allies, the Chinese and the Russians, who, because they have engaged the enemy so much longer and so much more extensively, have suffered a thousand times more than we. It indelibly etches in our consciousness the barbarous nature of the beast we must exterminate. And it leaves us with one dominant thought. Let us open a second front immediately and begin the process of wiping out the Axis.

In the Cellar

THERE were once two sinister gentlemen named Burke and Hare. They cooperated brilliantly in their profession, which was that of selling corpses, strictly fresh, to Dr. Knox of the local medical school. Once lured into their cellar, the unfortunate victim was smothered by one while the other picked his pocket. Or, as the song says:

Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification sent to NEW MASSES rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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"Burke's the butcher, Hare's the thief,
And Knox the lad wha buys the beef."

And now there are two gentlemen of Congress named Dies and Kerr; they cooperate brilliantly. The Dies Committee, protector of Nazis and local "shirts," sets itself the evil purpose of thwarting the democratic process of government. It attacks, among others, Dr. Goodwin Watson and Dr. William E. Dodd (son of the late ambassador) for subversive activities —even "subversive thoughts." And the Kerr committee, set up to investigate the charges, accepts Dies' statements at their face value. It asks Dr. Watson for samples of his writings—and does not wait for their arrival, but declares that Watson and Dodd should both be fired. They have been associated with such groups as the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom, the Conference on Pan-American Democracy, the League for Peace and Democracy, the Descendants of the American Revolution. Such repetition of the word "democracy" naturally makes Kerr of North Carolina reach for his revolver. Other charges include "contributing a statement condemning anti-Semitism" to a League of American Writers pamphlet. *Rassenschande!* And it seems that Dr. Dodd once offered a cocktail to Harry Bridges. What more do you want?

The Kerr committee defines "subversive" vaguely as "seeking to distort the government's functions, impede its projects or lessen its efforts"; and that not necessarily in a recognizable way, but even "subtly or indirectly." In practice, however, the committee uses a much clearer definition of "subversive"; it means anti-fascist. A Red-baiting official in the government recently explained that Watson's and Dodd's crime was being "prematurely and excessively anti-fascist."

THINGS must be called by their names. This is an attempt by the appeasement and poll-tax clique in Congress to seize control of the executive branch of the government, as well as the legislative, thus abrogating the Constitution; to keep all anti-fascists out of our governmental structure. The Dies and Kerr committees ignore evidence, the rules of law, the Bill of Rights and its outlawing of star chamber proceedings. They try a man, unheard, before what Kerr calls "the court of public opinion," which he explains as "what you hear up and down the street . . . just rumor."

The Nazis love Rumor dearly; this great god has done jobs for them before, but they could never hope to enthrone him as the arbiter of our national life without the aid of this couple of Congressional committees. Dies and Kerr are trying to get democracy by the throat in their cellar, and Goebbels is the lad wha buys the beef.

The Polish-Soviet Break

MR. MOLOTOV'S note explaining the severance of relations between the Soviet Union and the Polish government in London is also a trenchant reply to the series of Polish provocations which in effect has aligned the government-in-exile with the Nazis. It was only last week that the democratic world was shocked by the Polish accusations that Moscow was responsible for Goebbels' criminal inventiveness, and the Polish government without batting an eye took up the Nazi charges against the Russians with a campaign of slander every bit as venomous as anything poured out of the Axis radio.

Whatever hope was placed in General Sikorski's eliminating the fascist coterie from his government came to an end when he too permitted this outrageous campaign against an ally with whom he had signed a pact of friendship in December of 1941. This fascist coterie, at first in a minority, came to dominate the Sikorski government until the only reason for its not being called an Axis satellite lay in the fact that its center of operations was London and not Berlin. This government has continuously nibbled at United Nations harmony. Its official and unofficial spokesmen collaborated with British and American diehards in devising schemes for the creation of an eastern European federation against the Soviet Union. A recent sponsor of cordon sanitaire policy was Count Lipski, the former Polish envoy to Berlin.

At no time, as a matter of fact, did the Polish government cleanse itself of pre-war figures, including military and diplomatic officials, who brought the country to ruin. For example, the present foreign minister is Count Edward Raczynski, an ally and friend of the notorious Colonel Beck who dominated the fascist diplomatic apparatus of Poland before 1939. It was to Beck that Raczynski owed his appointment as ambassador to London. While the Polish people hailed the Soviet-Polish agreement as a turning point in relations between both countries, it was foredoomed to failure so long as the enemies of the agreement gained the controlling hand. The pact itself did not become symbolic of a change in attitude or policy toward the USSR. It became the armor plate behind which Polish fascists in and out of the government—Ignacy Matuszewski, Finance Minister Henryk Strasburger, Minister to Canada Victor Podoski, Minister of War Marian Kukiel, to name but a handful of the culprits—were planning the strategy of letting Germany bleed Russia while they reaped the fruits of territorial aggrandizement.

The unreconstructed Polish government and its collaborators without portfolio in the West also sanctioned the recent "congress" of Poles from "northeastern countries" held in Edinburgh. The meeting hardly whispered a word about advancing the battle against Hitler's ocupation of Poland; it concentrated on questions regarding the future of Polish borders in the east and initiated a movement for splitting the Lithuanian republic from the USSR. The atmosphere was one of unmitigated hostility toward the Soviet Union.

This "congress" was followed by a meeting last December in London of the Polish National Council. The Council insisted that the treaty of Riga, formulated in 1920, be used as the basis for determining eastern frontiers. Imposed on the young Soviet government when it was militarily exhausted, this pirate document robbed the Soviets of parts of the Ukraine and Byelorussia which came under degrading Polish rule. Almost simultaneously with this Council declaration the Polish government saw to it that the Polish army, built on Soviet soil and with Soviet aid after an agreement with Moscow in July 1941, was not sent to the front lines to fight the Nazis but was withdrawn and sent to Iran. In strongest contrast was the attitude of the Czech government which speeded the organization of its military force on Soviet territory and sent it to battle alongside the Red Army. Here is the difference between two governments, one of which honorably lived up to its agreements and another to whom written obligations were not worth the wax with which they were sealed.

In forthcoming issues we shall discuss in detail the slovenly history of the Polish government-in-exile. In the meantime it should be emphasized that Dr. Goebbels has won a new ally whose continued existence among the United Nations is no more reasonable or justified than the existence of a cabal of spies determined to wreck allied unity. A happy, thriving, independent Poland is to be fervently desired. The Sikorski government has proven itself a menace to the Polish people and a definite handicap to the progress of all the Allied powers.

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Hitler Was Displeased

THE Office of War Information and its chief, Elmer Davis, are being subjected to four separate investigations—in the House by the Dies and Costello committees, in the Senate by the O'Mahoney and Appropriations committees. Unfortunately, like so many other heads of war agencies who find themselves targets of scurrilous attacks from the reactionaries in Congress (with the press doing its part to whip up a first class lynch spirit), Elmer Davis mistakenly attempts to deflect criticism by giving ground. In his eagerness to propitiate the defeatists who falsely claim that OWI is a "nest of Reds and draft-dodgers," he himself falls into the trap of Red-baiting. Mr. Davis bends his knee to the few who discover "treason" in the better OWI pamphlets because the pamphlets defend President Roosevelt's policies for an all-out war. He promises never again to permit such "propaganda"; he will put an end to the OWI's few and hesitant ventures explaining the true nature of the Axis enemy to the American public.

What the assault on OWI boils down to is whether or not a war agency should seek to spur the public's desire to prosecute the war with every possible energy. In reality, criticism leveled, for example, against OWI's pamphlet "Warsaw, Tale of A City," reveals the profound dislike on the part of the Fishes and Wheelers for any discussion of this country's real stakes in the conflict. By capitulating, Mr. Davis accepts severe limitations—a step, incidentally, toward Senator Wheeler's goal of eliminating OWI altogether. He agrees to restrict the agency to the function of releasing news items and to the oversimple techniques of poster and newspaper advertising—the pretty girl holding a bond, the pretty girl working in a factory, the pretty girl collecting scrap. No one can object to the OWI employing the slick skill of advertising experts, any more than one can object to pictures of pretty girls. It is something else, however, to abandon OWI to the exclusive mercies of ad men, as Davis seems inclined to do.

No doubt the forty artists and writers who resigned in protest (including the Pulitzer prize winner Henry Pringle), blurred the issue when they posed the conflict as a choice between "truth and ballyhoo." More exactly, the issue is whether capable artists and writers are to be prevented from presenting the war for what it is—a struggle against the bestiality of fascism, a struggle for national survival, a struggle for the liberation of all oppressed and conquered peoples.

Is it not revealing that the Hitler radio agrees with the congressional objectors about OWI "propaganda"? What sense is there in the reactionary pretense that facts and the fundamental issues of the war are mutually contradictory? Clearly, the need is for OWI to push ahead aggressively with a program of presenting straight news as well as to interpret the meaning of the war, even though the defeatists squawk and Hitler is displeased.

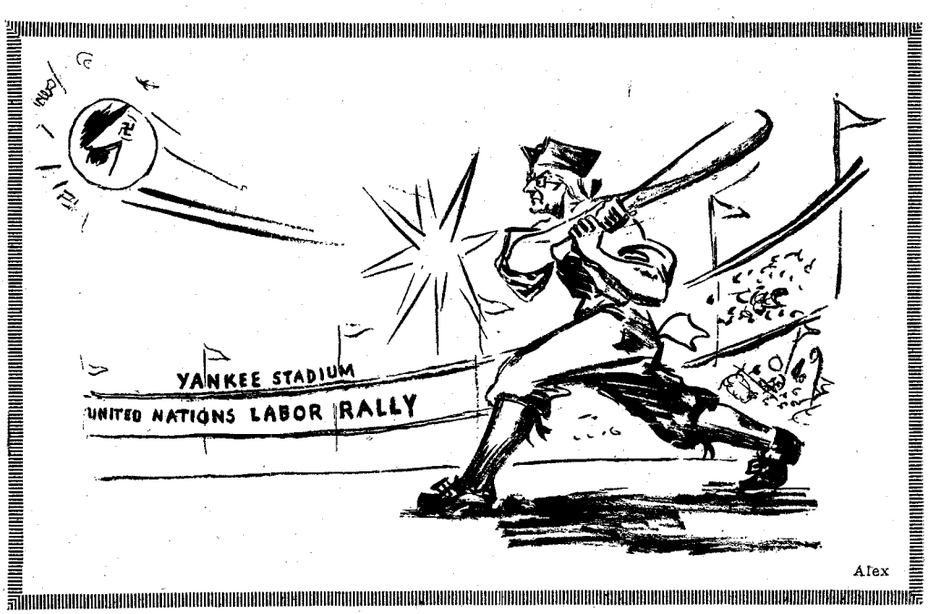
The Miners' Case

BY THE time this issue of NEW MASSES is off the press the question of whether there is to be a nationwide strike of bituminous coal miners will probably have been decided for the immediate present. In the public mind the bulky, turbulent form of John L. Lewis has tended to blot out the 450,000 miners and their families that are involved in this dispute. Headline thinking has helped obscure the real issues. To affirm the justice of the miners' cause is not to exonerate Lewis. On the contrary, one cannot truly defend the miners and the national interest without condemning those whose tactics from the beginning were directed toward precipitating a strike—Lewis and the coal operators. Both are equally guilty and each has lent strength to the other.

During weeks of negotiations with the United Mine Workers the operators have displayed an attitude which shows a complete lack of elementary good faith. On two occasions Dr. John Steelman, Department of Labor conciliator, has pointed out that these negotiations cannot be called collective bargaining since the operators have failed to make any counter-proposals to the union's demands, which included a two dollar a day increase in the basic wage and portal-to-portal pay. Nor did the operators make any counter-proposal to the suggestion of the Conciliation Service that a guaranteed six-day week the year round be agreed to in principal, a suggestion which the union accepted but the owners turned down. It is clear that the operators have been staking everything on forcing the War Labor Board into the picture on the assumption that the board will support their reiterated "No" to the miners' demands.

No less alien to good faith has been Lewis' attitude. Out of hatred for the Roosevelt administration and hostility to the war against fascism he has decided to play the wrathful Achilles, refusing any truck with the WLB and insisting on the strike as the only defense weapon for the miners, irrespective of its effect on the war effort.

The government's proposal of a guaranteed six-day week is still the best compromise solution. It will increase the miners' earnings without violating President Roosevelt's recent executive order. And it will promote full operation of the mines. Should the owners remain obstinate, let the government take over and run the mines, incorporating its own proposal in a new contract with the union. The country cannot afford any interruption in coal production. This is the way to prevent it.



Knocking the Axis "out of the lot" is the healthiest sport in the world today. Tens of thousands will give a demonstration of it this Sunday, May 2, at the Second Front Rally in New York's Yankee Stadium. Big leaguers will include Margaret Bondfield, *Great Britain's first woman Cabinet Minister*; Sen. Claude Pepper of Florida; Dr. Wei Tao-ming, Chinese ambassador to the United States; Joseph Curran, president of the National Maritime Union; Genevieve Tabouis, French writer and editor; Mayor Fiorello La Guardia; and two stage stars—Edward Johnson of "The Patriots" and Morris Carnovsky of "Counterattack." The whole crowd will be in there pitching. You won't want to miss it.

NM SPOTLIGHT

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WATCH ON THE POTOMAC by BRUCE MINTON

HOME OWNERS AND LOSERS

Washington.

EVERETT M. DIRKSEN, Republican representative from Pekin, Ill., has often condemned President Roosevelt's foreign policy. In addition, he has distinguished himself as a crusader for "economy" and against "bureaucracy" fostered, of course, by the administration. Lawyer Dirksen, currently the subject of an article in *Fortune* which selects him as the prototype of a "typical" congressman, is a curly-headed six-footer with an undeniable ability to toss off a well delivered speech. He is past master of all the oratorical tricks, the whisper and the roar, the ingratiating compliment and the horrendous threat, the apt joke and the intimidating bluster. As an influential member of the House Appropriations Committee, he has led many an attack on the New Deal. At the moment, he is charging belligerently at the Farm Security Administration, a useful and necessary weapon in the Food for Victory program.

This worthy gentleman from Illinois has just emerged from a fiery, and to date successful, crusade against the Home Owners Loan Corp. This feather in his cap is worth a moment's consideration. Mr. Dirksen's project turns out to be another victory for the "economy" he so ardently desires. Lamentably the saving he anticipates will needlessly cost the government (and therefore the taxpayers) at least $440,000,000. It will also help undermine the morale of the nation—not to mention the war effort—by deliberately discriminating against thousands of small home owners. Other thousands whose mortgages are now held by the HOLC will find themselves evicted and their houses on which they have spent their savings lost to them.

For this holy cause, Mr. Dirksen has expended his great unselfish energy. It is perhaps superfluous to note in passing that Mr. Dirksen's scheme just happens to promise a fat profit to a few large savings and loan corporations.

THE whole business is characterized by a noteworthy simplicity. Mr. Dirksen managed to win House approval for an amendment bearing his name which will force the Home Owners Loan Corp. to liquidate within a year, and to turn its *good* mortgages (the *good* must be stressed) over to private loan corporations. During the depression, in 1933, HOLC was set up to take over mortgages that private banks, loan and insurance companies were no longer able to carry. The federal government, by assuming these obligations, saved the financial groups from bankruptcy and disaster. Since 1936 the HOLC has made no new loans on houses of any description, so the agency cannot be accused of competing with private enterprise. Through HOLC intervention, thousands of home owners were able to retain their small property, and to pay off mortgages at reasonable rates over a reasonably long period of time.

If the HOLC can continue to service these mortgages, the majority will prove sound, and income from the sound mortgages will satisfactorily offset losses incurred on the unsound. In other words, HOLC will in the normal course of events liquidate itself without financial loss to the government.

MR. DIRKSEN, however, is dissatisfied. His amendment, awaiting approval from the Byrd joint "economy" committee (Senator Byrd of Virginia is a great one for accusing the administration of wastefulness and bureaucracy), is now being considered by the Senate Appropriation Committee. Mr. Dirksen's amendment would liquidate the HOLC within a year —at great loss to the taxpayers. Incidentally, all sound mortgages would be handed over at a discount to the private loan institutions, while the government would be allowed to retain the bad mortgages. But immediate liquidation of HOLC would condemn the small home owners in arrears on interest payments to foreclosure. Those more fortunately paid up will find themselves dealing with the private financiers. Interest rates will automatically rise from the present level of four and a half percent to the new level of five percent. Should the home owner fall behind in payments he will in all likelihood lose his house (state laws in many instances are very strict and allow the home owner little leeway once he becomes delinquent).

The HOLC's policy has been quite flexible. Every attempt is made to encourage the little owner to get back on his feet. The result has been to rescue many small home owners and to allow them to retain their property. But private institutions subject to state laws cannot be so tolerant—even if there were any inclination in that direction. To add to the home owners' woes, many now permitted by HOLC to pay off mortgages over a period of twenty to twenty-five years would be forced to pay off in fifteen years. The burden on the little fellow would be immeasurably increased, again leading to additional foreclosures.

THERE is no need to dwell on the effects of the Dirksen amendment. Morale, and naturally the war effort, will inevitably suffer with its passage; the security of thousands of workers and small middle class people will be threatened. As a by-product, the government will take a huge loss—utterly unnecessary—and the great financial institutions will be handed a very juicy plum. Mr. Dirksen, for all his anguish over bureaucracy and economy, knows quite well that in the long run the HOLC can pay for itself.

Of course, the United States Savings and Loan League, the powerful lobby which thinks the world of Mr. Dirksen, is all for the amendment. Both Mr. Dirksen and the League have a great deal to say about public welfare and getting on with the war effort, a much desired end which they claim will result from the legislation. Their arguments narrow down to the following four telling points:

1. "The sale of such assets [*good* mortgages held by HOLC] at this time will contribute to the solution of the manpower problem by releasing nearly 4,000 employes of the corporation. Such sale will also release office space which is much needed in the war program."

2. "Such sale will also release a substantial volume of typewriters, adding machines, and other office equipment which is needed in the war program."

3. "We think the interests of the people of the United States are better served by offering HOLC borrowers an opportunity to do business with a local private lending institution rather than with a government corporation." This privilege, it should be remarked, will be accompanied by higher amortization payments, higher interest levies, and the appealing prospect of foreclosure.

4. "If there are losses to the government and the taxpayers now, they must grow out of loans and loan policies followed by the Corporation in its earlier days."

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The last point is a bit thick, even for the US Savings and Loan League, though Mr. Dirksen tosses it off quite handily. It would mean, actually, that the taxpayers would be penalized to the tune of approximately $300,000,000 by the savings and loan associations, banks, insurance companies, and other mortgage institutions for rescuing these organizations from severe financial difficulties, even disaster, several years ago.

SOME quotations from the House debate are revealing. Rep. James M. Fitzpatrick of New York, who led the fight against the amendment, declared: "I am in favor of liquidating, providing the building and loan associations throughout the country take over all the mortgages now held by the HOLC and not just sixty percent which is the amount of the good mortgages. . . . From the best information I can get, if this amendment is adopted, 200,000 to 300,000 home owners will lose their homes through foreclosures. . . . I understand the building and loan associations have here in Washington a lobbyist receiving a salary of $25,000 per annum." Rep. Eugene J. Keogh of New York pointed out that the private institutions "would in effect be using government money to the extent of $120,000,000 to buy good assets of the government and thereby greatly increase the government's losses and debt. They did not want these investments in 1933. They should not want them today."

The amendment, warns Morris Engel, counsel for HOLC Mortgagors, must be defeated in the Senate by bringing intensive pressure, particularly from small home owners, on the legislators. But, aside from the specific issue, Mr. Dirksen's great crusade provides an interesting insight into the essential meaning of the reactionaries' hue and cry against bureaucracy and in favor of economy. Their cure inevitably proves to be expensive and exceedingly dangerous. The moral of this little story is: Rob congressmen of their disguise as public protectors against the New Deal "extravagance" and administration "dictatorship," and they stand revealed as the same old practitioners of the same old game of politics-as-usual. These days, the game can be played only at the expense of the fight against the Axis.

AROUND THE WORLD

SUGAR-COATED BILL

San Juan.

THE non-labor press of America, which for several months campaigned against Governor Tugwell—that is to say, against President Roosevelt—keeps a sepulchral silence these days about the most important event which has occurred in Puerto Rico since its occupation by the United States in 1898. Last February Puerto Rico's House and Senate unanimously approved a resolution petitioning Congress and the United States government "to bring to an immediate end the colonial status of the Island and to grant to Puerto Ricans the right of self-determination" in accordance with the Atlantic Charter.

WHY was the event ignored by most American newspapers? The explanation is simple: because all Puerto Ricans had united themselves to terminate the exploitation of the Island by American sugar interests. The end of Puerto Rico's colonial status would mean the end of fabulous profits for those vested groups.

Americans will recall that in an effort to justify the infamous campaign against Tugwell and the Puerto Rican forces which support him, the United States Senate appointed a committee dominated by reactionary senators—Chavez, Taft, and Ellender. The committee's job was nothing other than to attribute to Tugwell and to the administration's policies Puerto Rico's hunger and starvation and thereby bring about Tugwell's dismissal.

But the Chavez committee failed in its purpose. To date Chavez has not presented his report. After all the verbal slanders directed at Tugwell, preliminary reports are indicative that the committee will probably not have enough nerve to put in writing the nonsense that Puerto Rico's economic crisis rests on the shoulders of Governor Tugwell or President Roosevelt. Instead they will attribute the chaos on the Island to such a fantastic miscellany of ideas as "excess of population," to "cyclones," to the "period of Spanish rule." In fact they may even go so far as to put the blame for the Island's unemployment on the notion that Puerto Ricans "have not learned English during the forty-five years of American intervention."

The campaign against the administration is now taking another direction. It is being pressed on behalf of the sugar interests against Puerto Rican unity; it aims to avoid fulfilling President Roosevelt's recommendation for the election of a Puerto Rican governor. Why? Because the election now of a Puerto Rican governor would be "dangerous" inasmuch as there is a strong popular movement on the Island fully capable of conducting such an election and even going beyond that. This is hardly pleasing to American reactionaries and their Puerto Rican cronies. The governor who would be elected in Puerto Rico today would be a hundred times more progressive than the progressive Tugwell; the laws which would be approved by the Puerto Rican Legislature, controlled by the Popular and Liberal Parties, would even be more progressive than those sanctioned by Tugwell.

THIS is what the so-called Tydings Bill for Puerto Rican "independence" would like to prevent. On the eve of the arrival in Washington of a committee of the Puerto Rican legislature to ask for the termination of the Island's colonial status, the Tydings Bill is being promoted to divide Puerto Ricans and prolong the colonial relationship. The Tydings Bill is unacceptable from every point of view. It places a price on Puerto Rican independence which would only intensify the Island's tragic condition. Among its provisions to safeguard the interests of American citizens are the granting to the United States without indemnification the best naval bases and areas of the Island; the subjection of Puerto Rico for twenty years to the caprices of certain American imperialist interests. During this period Puerto Ricans would not be permitted to carry on any free trade; the Americans also reserve the right to intervene in the Island's affairs if all the debts incurred during the period of imperialist exploitation are not settled. This is the kind of "independence" the Tydings Bill proposes—an independence which would undoubtedly spell the complete ruin of Puerto Rican economy.

The Tydings bill has confused many people in the United States, in Latin America, and in Puerto Rico itself. The bill can only be viewed with the greatest skepticism. Those who are genuinely interested in the welfare of Puerto Rico must look for guidance to the progressive figures in the American Congress—to President Roosevelt—and to the masses of Puerto Ricans who wait for the day when they will decide their own destiny in a national plebiscite in which all the people will vote.

JUAN JOSE BERNALES.

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LABOR UNITY IN BRITAIN

R. Palme Dutt surveys the Communist proposals for affiliation with the British Labor Party. Perspectives for the crucial June conference. New tasks versus ancient quarrels. What the war demands.

London (by mail).

WILL the Labor Party accept the affiliation of the Communist Party at its coming conference this June? The importance of this question is equally recognized by supporters and by opponents of affiliation—indeed, by all sections of opinion and political parties. The declarations of the Communist Party and of the Labor Party Executive have received wide publicity. The arguments for and against have been freely canvassed. The volume of support already won for affiliation indicates that this proposal, which has long been before the Labor movement, has now, with the development of events, clearly come within the region of practical politics.

Why has this issue come to the forefront now? The answer is: it has come to the forefront because of the experience and plain needs of the present situation—a situation which has obviously compelled the cooperation of the anti-Communist Churchill with the Communist Stalin; of the anti-Communist Sir Walter Citrine with the Communist Shvernik; the former persecutor of the Communists, Chiang-Kai-shek, with the Communist Mao Tse-tung; the Liberal President Benes with the Communist Beuer; the Conservative de Gaulle with the Socialist Gouin and the Communist Grenier; or of the Labor Party leader, Attlee, with the Liberal Party leader, Sinclair, and the Conservative Party leader, Churchill. Such a situation inevitably gives rise to the question: why should it still remain impossible—the solitary exception—for Laborites Attlee and Bevin to find a basis of cooperation with Communists Pollitt and Gallacher to serve the common interests of the Labor movement?

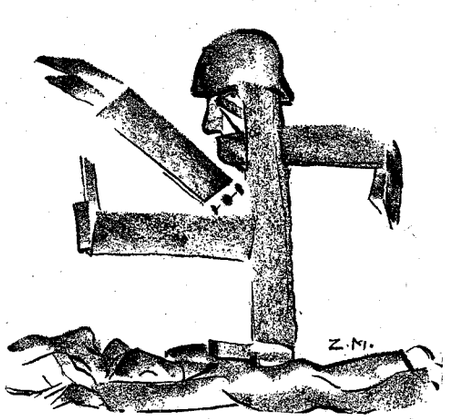
To settle the issue now is urgent because of its practical bearing on the present tasks of the war and the problems of the labor movement, no less than for the future.

THE current political and war situations powerfully underline this urgency. What is the heart of the problems which face us today? At every turn there is a conflict: on one side pressing needs of the war and the democratic, anti-fascist wishes of the overwhelming majority of the people; on the other side, obstruction and sabotage by powerful reactionary interests to hamper the war's effective prosecution, intrigue to promote policies of conciliation to fascism, the spreading of anti-Soviet propaganda, and the hindering of full mobilization and progressive advance at home.

Months after the British-Soviet Alliance the effective combined action which that alliance made possible for the final defeat of fascism is not yet realized, and in consequence the war is prolonged. The Red Army still fights alone in Europe, and the second front is still delayed. Goering openly appeals to "the gentlemen" against "the Bolsheviks," and proclaims his hopes in "clear-thinking men in London." Powerful industrialists come out in opposition to the Joint Production Committees, after the functioning of these committees has helped to raise war production fifty percent in the past year. The insurance companies and vested interests are able to trample underfoot the overwhelming popular demand for enactment of the Beveridge Report, thus compelling the Labor representatives to register an opposition vote.

The Labor Party is confronted with sharp dilemmas in the face of this state of affairs: the parliamentary Labor Party finds itself officially leading a vote in opposition to the Labor Ministers, while the principal Labor spokesman is assigned the role of rallying the Conservatives against the official criticism of the parliamentary Labor Party. Such a contradictory situation inevitably weakens the basis of the coalition against fascism, and thus opens the road to dangerous forces. The popular indignation, and concentration of Labor attention, on domestic and postwar issues, in opposition to the reactionary offensive, increases the danger of diverting attention from the decisive issues of the war, and especially from the fight for the second front, which is the governing issue of the whole situation and decisive for the entire future.

The reactionaries begin their open opposition on domestic issues, with a view to preparing the ground, if they succeed in their work of political disintegration, for an advance to the international plane—that is, to their policies of conciliating fascism and extending Darlanism to all Axis Europe (including Germany, as they already begin to hint in their public utterances). The strategic aim of the increasing activities from the right—both in Britain and the United States—on the basis of a hundred domestic issues to weaken the anti-fascist coalition rallied around Churchill and Roosevelt, has the ultimate goal of defeating the "unconditional surrender" policy proclaimed by Churchill and Roosevelt, and ensuring the victory of reaction throughout Europe and at home.



THE key aim of the reactionary maneuver is to disintegrate the present coalition, weaken its progressive forces, discredit the Labor Ministers, and provoke Labor into opposition. This is a grave, dangerous, and urgent moment. The political weakness at home is the basic cause of the delays and setbacks in the military action of Britain and the United States, which is in such glaring contrast to the mighty advance of the Soviet armies. Yet for the anti-fascist forces of the world there was never such a moment to achieve the height of action and power, if we seize our opportunities.

The way forward can lie only in strengthening the progressive forces within the coalition and within the coalition government. But this means, above all, strengthening the Labor movement, and thereby its influence in the government and in the direction of policy. The mass stirring and ferment and the leftward swing of opinion, which has accompanied the Soviet advance and the prospect of victory over fascism, needs to be led and organized along a positive path: not futile paths of disruption or sectional divisions, not dissipated by blind absorption in a hundred secondary domestic or postwar issues, but as a united, powerful, and responsible movement to fulfill the role of leader and driving force in all the tasks of the war. However, this task is impossible of accomplishment so long as disunity saps the Labor movement's vitality; so long as the mainstream of mass awakening, a great part of which is now visibly directed toward Communism, is artificially cut off from the masses of the Labor movement in the political field. Strengthening the Labor movement requires the unity of the Labor movement.

On a longer view, it may be said that the determination of this question also means the determination, in a preliminary form, of the British people's whole future during the coming critical decade of transition from the old social order to the new—whether that transition shall take place

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as harmoniously as possible through the strength and leadership of a united Labor movement; or whether, through disunity the tragedy of the two inter-war decades may be repeated in an even more disastrous form. Nothing less than that is involved in this seemingly organizational question of the Communist Party's affiliation to the Labor Party.

IN POSING the question in this form, it is emphasized as a question of Britain and the British Labor movement. This must be made clear at the outset, in view of the confusion sometimes caused by the attempts of a small section of those opposed to affiliation to evade the issue and escape the responsibility of a decision here in Britain by transferring the question from the national to the international plane. With a curious reversal of their former role, a section of those opposed to affiliation have made play in public with the idea of a British Labor delegation to Moscow as the oracle and source of inspiration for the solution of the problems of the British movement. Apparently they hope by this maneuver to avoid a decision and to deprive the British Labor organizations of the right to settle their own problems in their own way.

That is why it must be made plain that the proposal of the Communist Party's affiliation to the Labor Party is a British question, arising from the conditions of the British movement. It could arise in no other country, because nowhere else are the conditions comparable. Only in Britain have we this special federal form of the Labor Party, based on a combination of Trade Unions, Socialist organizations and individual members, with a continuously evolving program and policy. We have here a unique opportunity to achieve a characteristically British solution of the problem of unity and difference, and to advance along a harmonious path of united progressive development, allowing for changing and evolving views within the movement, but avoiding the internecine conflicts which have dogged the steps of the movement in many other countries. We should be fools to fail to take practical advantage of this opportunity in Britain because the more difficult and complicated problems of unity on the international field must still be solved.

UNDOUBTEDLY the international consequences of a favorable solution of the problem of unity in Britain would be far reaching. A united British Labor movement would be able to exercise a powerful and beneficent influence in the direction of international labor unity. But these are consequences which would follow on the achievement of unity in Britain. Unity, like charity, begins at home.

The wide response to the proposal of affiliation already expressed among constituent organizations of the Labor Party, national, district, and local, which have recorded an opinion, indicates that the sense of a new situation and new needs is growing among thinking members of all Labor organizations. Within a few weeks of the opening of the campaign, by the middle of February, support had been recorded from six national trade union executives, fifty-eight trade union district committees, 628 trade union branches, thirty-seven Trade Councils and fifty-two Constituency Labor Parties—a notable beginning when few organizations have yet met to record a decision.

A new generation has grown up in the Labor movement, to whom the old controversies, which weigh so heavily in the minds of many of the older leaders, are not even a memory. They have grown up in conditions of the anti-fascist struggle, with a burning sense of the gravity of the fight and the need of unity, with a deep admiration of the Soviet Union, and with a serious concern to measure up to the new tasks and problems arising from the present war. There are from 4,000,000 to 5,000,000 more organized workers today than there were a decade ago (8,500,000 at the end of 1942 and rapidly increasing, as against a little over 4,000,000 in 1933, or a doubling of numbers), even though most of them are not yet in the Labor Party. For them what MacDonald, Snowden, or Frank Hodges may have said twenty years ago is not necessarily the last word in wisdom. They are stifled by the existence of barriers and discriminatory regulations, derived from past controversies, for which they can see no present reason or meaning.

The older leaders on both sides have a profound responsibility; to approach the present problems in a fresh and realistic spirit, irrespective of previous viewpoints, looking not so much to the past as to the future, and above all seeking to understand the outlook and serve the interests of this new generation on whom will fall the brunt of the decisive struggle for socialism. The past has no right to impose its prejudices on the future.

POLITICAL parties are not static. The Labor Party and the Communist Party have both sprung from the working class movement and have been built up by the sincere efforts and sacrifices of workers striving to find the path of liberation. Both parties have passed through many experiences during these past twenty years and they have had the opportunity to learn much. Let us profit by our lessons. The older leaders of the labor movement half a century ago bitterly opposed the formation of a Labor Party. But after twenty years of continuous struggle the Labor Party was formed. The older leaders in the first stage of the Labor Party strongly opposed the adoption of a program of socialism. But a program of socialism was finally adopted after eighteen years. During the past twenty years the older leaders have bitterly opposed the recognition of Communism as an integral section of the working class movement with equal rights, at the same time that more and more of the younger and more ardent spirits among the workers were moving toward Communism. Hence the tragedies of these past twenty years.

Let us learn our lesson. The embittered controversies of the Liberals, Laborites, and the Socialists which preceded the formation of the Labor Party have now vanished into the forgotten past, and only the outcome, the historical achievement remains. So, too, let us hope, the no less embittered controversies of the twenty years during which some tried to build an artificial barrier against the advance of Communism in the working class movement with equal rights, may also pass into a distant memory with the further evolution of the Labor Party, provided we rise to our present opportunities. The tide of the working class movement flows forward always; none can hold it back.

In this spirit of responsibility and a wider understanding, let us approach the question of affiliation, not from the standard of the demands or interests of any particular section, but from the standpoint of the interests of the working class movement as a whole and of democratic advance in Britain.

R. PALME DUTT.

In his concluding article in next week's issue Mr. Dutt discusses the state of affairs within the Labor Party and the advantages to be gained from the Communist Party's proposal for affiliation.

Stanley DeGraff

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HISTORY IS NO ACCIDENT

V. J. Jerome discusses the hero worship of Thomas Carlyle and William James. The arguments for "indeterminism" are tested and found wanting. Second in a series of three articles.

ACCIDENTALISM is an old story: It has for centuries been the basis for the prevailing types of interpretation of wars and historical changes. Often the thesis is presented in philosophic garb, when it becomes but a less fanciful version of such profound interpretations of wars and social upheavals as the theory of the world-transforming beauty of Helen of Troy—"The face that launched a thousand ships." Or, the proposition of Blaise Pascal, that "Cleopatra's nose: had it been shorter, the whole face of the world would have been altered." Or, the theory anent Henry VIII's famous divorce which—as who troubles to dispute?—divorced England from the Church of Rome, and wedded that "blessed plot" to the land, tithes, and treasures of the abandoned Church (not to speak of what it did for the advance of merchant capital and the rise of England as a colonial empire)—all because Bluff King Hal tired of Kate and wanted Anne!

Accidentalism has not lacked theoreticians who have sought to justify its method. In Germany, for instance, Wilhelm Windelband and his successor at Heidelberg, Heinrich Rickert, held that history cannot undertake to deal with reality in terms of laws or generalizations, being concerned exclusively with the unique, the individual. "Only the individual and once-occurring [*Einmalige*] has really happened," asserts Rickert, "and only a science that speaks of real events which have occurred but once can be called a science of history." (Heinrich Rickert, *Die Grenzen der naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung*, Tuebingen, 1921, p. 168). A "science" of history without general principles! A "science" without scientific laws! Rickert turns history into non-science with his assumption that, in contrast to the natural sciences, it deals only with nature in its concrete and individual aspect and is therefore unable to frame general laws of development.

In the Anglo-American accidentalist tradition, Thomas Carlyle and William James stand out prominently. What might be called Carlyle's hero-cratic conception of history is summed up in his statement, "Universal History, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked here." (*On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History*, Ch. 1.) James, whose genius worship is akin to Carlyle's hero worship, furnishes an important illustration of the dangers of accidentalism for our understanding of the historical process and the place of wars in it. A discussion of James' interpretation of social change should prove especially rewarding in view of the fact that his pragmatic philosophy has exercised a far-reaching social role through its commanding influence on American bourgeois ideologies and its repercussions on the thought-style of philosophers and politicos abroad.

In his essay "Great Men and Their Environment," published in 1860, James sets forth his theory of "the fermentative influence of geniuses":

"The community *may* evolve in many ways. The accidental presence of this or that ferment decides in which way it *shall* evolve." (William James, *The Will To Believe*, New York, 1905, p. 229)

The community, it appears, is nothing but the abode of many abstract possibilities. It has no self-movement which necessarily impels it on a *certain* path of evolution. Whatever movement it does reveal is due to the chance presence of a particular type of "ferment" coming from God knows where.

To illustrate his theory, James turns to the arena of wars:

"Would England have today the 'imperial' ideal which she now has if a certain boy named Bob Clive had shot himself, as he tried to do, in Madras? . . . Had Bismarck died in his cradle, the Germans would still be satisfied with appearing to themselves as a race of spectacled *Gelehrten* and political herbivora, and to the French as *ces bons*, or *ces naifs, Allemands*. Bismarck's will showed them, to their own great astonishment, that they could play a far livelier game." (*Ibid.*, p. 228)

"France, in 1792, taking the tone of its St. Justs and Marats, plunged into its long career of unstable outward relations." (*Ibid.*, p. 251)

Let us test this argument for indeterminism, the reverse of historical necessity, in the light of history.

ACTUALLY, any serious examination of Clive's role in India will show him to have been, not a demiurge creating history out of thin air, but the active, influential *instrument* of forces far greater than himself. It is as fatuous to advance the "ferment" theory of India's conquest as it would be to ascribe solely to this or that outstanding statesman Britain's tenacious hold upon the "imperial ideal," even today. Even today, when Britain's national existence is measurably endangered by Tory obstinacy on the question of India! From Clive to Cripps, each one of the Ministers, Governors General, Principal Secretaries of State, Viceroys, and emissaries has represented in his individual role, greater or lesser, a link in the chain of Britain's continuous colonial policy. It matters not whether this policy operated through a pillaging commercial corporation, as at first, or through the government's assumption of control in behalf of the entire bourgeois class; whether through the open despotism of a Hastings or the "liberalism" of a Morley, the "old school" of a Wellington or the reformism of a Minto, the Tory imperialism of a Curzon or the "labor" imperialism of a MacDonald. Through all the changes in politics and in personalities at the helm the Tory class interests with regard to India asserted themselves consistently and inevitably.

Clive's part in the conquest of India can be understood only in its relation to the decisive role, in the eighteenth century, of the British East India Co., incorporated far back in 1600—a privileged monopoly agency of English merchant capital. The subjugation and plunder of India expressed, not the "ferment" of any individual genius, but the expanding demand of the most developed bourgeoisie of the time for profits from vast colonial possessions. The conquest of India and the defeat, after 200 years of intermittent warfare, of England's foremost mercantile competitor, France, were part of a *historical process*. In forcing India into England's commercial orbit, the pirate merchants of the East India Co. illustrate the truth of Marx' statement:

"The particular task of bourgeois society is the establishment of the world market, at least in outlines, and of production based upon the world market." (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, International Publishers, New York, p. 117)

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The task had been marked out for the "heaven-born general"—and the work of accomplishing it well begun—by the drive of developing English capitalism toward "the empire on which the sun never sets." Lord Clive's outstanding generalship in the burglary of "the brightest jewel" played its momentous part within the context of the social and economic forces of which he was the product. Had he succeeded in his self-destruction as the "boy named Bob Clive," those forces would inevitably have found another executant, whose greater or lesser ability might have accelerated or delayed the accomplishment of the military-political tasks set by the East India Co. and the English merchant oligarchy. England's superior productive forces contained the assurance that the task would be carried through.

EQUALLY irrational is James' characterization of the role of Bismarck. The one-man theory regarding the Iron Chancellor is no more logical than the one-man theory regarding the Brown Chancellor. The vandals and obscurantists of the hooked cross are certainly the antitype of "spectacled *Gelehrten*." The blood-and-soil cannibals exulting in massacres of Soviet townspeople and villagers, hailing death on Coventries, slaughtering Lidices, and perpetrating the million-fold murder of defenseless Jews with the ultimate finesses of science—such Germans are indeed a far cry from political herbivora. Undoubtedly Bismarck's policies advanced the onsurge of reactionary Prussianism which has reached its most fiendish intensity and range in Hitler's Third Reich. But was Bismarck the "ferment" that "decides in which way [the community] *shall* evolve," the emanative cause that destined Germany to play its "livelier game"?

For James, the chance facts of Bismarck's birth and personality account for the whole transformation of Germany from impotence to militarized might. "Bismarck's will" is credited with a magical efficacy, capable of changing an entire national character and of determining the course of European history.

This theory conceals from view the historical forces out of which Bismarck emerged, and which set the objective and conditioned the mode of his work. It leaves out of account the powerful processes of Prussia's economic growth in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which made that kingdom by 1848 the inevitable center of commercial and industrial development among all the German States. Absent are the marked advantages long held by Prussia in its conflict with Austria for hegemony over the Germanies—a predominantly homogenous Germanic population, a military organization built up before Bismarck,[1] an efficient bureaucracy, and economic supremacy by virtue of the *Zollverein*, or Customs Union, Prussian-dominated since its inauguration in 1818.

Absent too are the historical factors responsible for the political weaknesses of the German bourgeoisie, which, fearful of the upsurge of the proletarians in any popular revolutionary movement, proved unable to achieve the democratic unification of Germany in the revolutionary way, but acceded to the reactionary unification "from above," through its alliance with the Prussian Junker Bismarck.

Prussian reaction brought forward its Bismarck—would have had to bring him forward: if the particular little Otto had "died in his cradle," then, through a greater or lesser substitute, from some one of the other Junker households which were rearing astute royalist sons. Bismarck, in behalf of the semi-feudal military bureaucracy, launched his "blood and iron" policy of a united German state. The ultra-reactionary landlord caste, aware that its era of power was over, was increasingly seeking unity with the bourgeoisie. It salvaged as many as possible of its feudal prerogatives by playing on capital's fear of the popular democratic forces—especially its dread of the proletarians. This coalition throve upon, and promoted through every agency, the indecision of the petty bourgeoisie. It throve also on the immaturity of the proletariat.

This is in no sense to discount the stamp of Bismarck upon his epoch. Bismarck's strong personality, in the key position he occupied, as contrasted with the flabby philistinism of the German bourgeoisie of the period, must have its due recognition; but it needs to be seen in terms of the *class* forces that were at work, instead of being regarded, with James, as a prime mover. Bismarck executed the combined drive of the ruling forces of feudal-monarchist Prussia and the rising but still far from dominant industrial bourgeoisie, which was striving to pass from the rudimentary unity of the Prussian-dominated *Zollverein* to a national Germany. As Engels put it:

"The bourgeoisie furnished him the goal, Louis Napoleon the road to the goal; the execution alone remained the work of Bismarck."

Bismarck's "will," considered apart from this overriding historical content, can only be an idealized abstraction.[2]

TO "EXPLAIN" the wars of the French Revolution, as James does, by "the tone of its St. Justs and Marats," is once again to see history upside down.

The role of the Jacobin leaders in relation to these wars can be understood only within the complex sum total of existing social forces and relationships. How else shall we explain the heroic resistance of the newly-risen revolutionary France to the threat to her national life from without and within, and, by sorry contrast in our day, the capitulation and the connivance with the enemy by the treason regime of Vichy? Shall we fall back on the "ferment" theory: then, historical accident furnished the tone of Robespierre, Marat, and St. Just, while now it furnishes the tone of Laval, Petain, and Darlan? There were men of the treasonous type of Laval and Petain in 1792, just as there are those who continue the heroic tradition of Marat and Robespierre today. Why is the tone of the one camp dominant in one period and not in another? We must find the answer in the specific alignment of social forces in each situation. The tone of the French Laval and Co.—the tone also of the Norwegian Quislings, the Czech Hachas, the Dutch Musserts, the Finnish Tanners, the British Clivedens, and the America Firsters—is obviously no accidental sound from the keyboard of history. The same note was struck—through various instrumentalists—by that camp among the big capitalists which for assured profits is ready to betray its own country to fascism.

The "ferment" theory prevents us from seeing France's "long career of unstable

[1] The regenerative years immediately following Prussia's disastrous war of 1806 witnessed the great military changes carried through, despite Napoleon's restrictions, by Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, resulting in the creation of the citizen-soldier army of reserves, the *Landwehr*, in 1812. It was in conjunction with that notable military reorganization and the educational system introduced by Humboldt that the sweeping liberalizing reforms under Stein's ministry laid the basis for Germany's unification and Prussia's military strength.

[2] Marx made short shrift of this problem of "will," so knotty to the Schoolmen of yesterday and today. In arguing against the theory of wages as a constant quantity—a theory designed to discourage working-class struggle for wage increases—he showed the absurdity of that theory by its inability to explain the difference between the wage levels in England and the United States save by the inference that the capitalists of these two countries were possessed by different wills. "But even then," Marx pressed the argument further, "we might ask, *why* the will of the American capitalist differs from the will of the English capitalist? And to answer the question you must go beyond the domain of *will*. . . . The *will* of the capitalist is certainly to take as much as possible. What we have to do is not to talk about his *will*, but to inquire into his *power*, the *limits of that power*, and the *character of those limits*." (*Value, Price, and Profit*, International Publishers, 1935, p. 11.)

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outward relations" begun as the explosion stage of the developing antagonism of the European absolutist states toward the new, revolutionary France.[3] It fails to reveal the fact that France did not plunge, but was plunged, into her "unstable outward relations"; that the war was thrust upon France, although formally she declared war against the threatening alliance of Austria and Prussia. It fails, further, to show that the war was declared in the face of the opposition of Marat and Robespierre, who distrusted the ability of the government, headed by the defeatist king, to wage successfully a war for the defense of revolutionary France, and who feared that war would weaken the Revolution.

The "ferment" theory, furthermore, must leave out of account the concrete conditions under which France finally *did* take "the tone of its St. Justs and Marats." The bourgeoisie had won its rights under the Constitutional Monarchy and the Legislative Assembly, dominated by the Gironde party of compromise with the old regime; but the feudal oppression of the peasants had not been uprooted, nor the power of the royalist aristocracy destroyed. Thus, reaction in France, fomenting the rebellion of its Vendee, could connive with the feudal powers abroad and with England for the restoration of absolutism and the crushing of the Revolution.

The rising of August 10, 1792, touched off by the exposure of the treason centered in the Court, eventuated because the masses had become convinced that the big bourgeoisie was abandoning the basic tasks of the Revolution. The Convention, led by the Jacobins—party of the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie—set about realizing the demands of the rural and urban masses: the abolition of feudal rights, the crushing of the counter-revolution, the establishment of a democratic republic, the destruction of the treasonous monarchy, and the effective waging of the war against the coalition of European reaction. The defense of the fatherland now coincided with the safeguarding and advancing of the Revolution. In this manner, on the basis of objective historical developments, France took "the tone of its St. Justs and Marats." In the words of Kropotkin, "the revolutionary education of the people was being accomplished by the Revolution itself." (Peter Kropotkin, *The Great French Revolution*, Vanguard Press, New York, 1929, Vol. I, p. 241.)

Seen in this light, France's "long career of unstable outward relations," ushered in by the war of national liberation, was the historical outcome of the class struggle in feudal-monarchist Europe. The role of parties and individuals reflected the contradictions of the material conditions existing in the Europe of that period; parties and individuals were accelerating or retarding influences—at times momentous—on the historic course.

James himself feels the weakness of his general position. In order to escape the absurdities to which he is driven, he resorts to that famous liberal "But—": "But the indeterminism is not absolute. Not every 'man' fits every 'hour.' Some incompatibilities there are. A given genius may come either too early or too late. Peter the Hermit would now be sent to a lunatic asylum. John Mill in the tenth century would have lived and died unknown. Cromwell and Napoleon need their revolutions, Grant his civil war." (James, *op. cit.*, pp. 229-30)

This statement would appear to give the "men" a social essence, to integrate his guiding ideas and his activity with the historical movement. Any assumption, however, that this "man"-"hour" concession brings James' genius the shadow of a shade nearer to objective reality, is immediately cancelled out by the statement: "Now, the important thing to notice is that what makes a certain genius now incompatible with his surroundings is usually the fact that some previous genius of a different strain has warped the community away from the sphere of his possible effectiveness." (*Ibid.*, p. 230.) And so we are back at the vicious circle: genius can only be understood in terms of genius! We must therefore dismiss as immaterial to the question of the social conditioning of geniuses, James' romantic hypothesis of a John Mill who came nine centuries too soon, or a present-day Peter the Hermit confined in a psychopathic ward. The very question, which James does not ask: what is the nature of the "man's" fitness for the "hour"? would bring him back with a jolt to the earth from whose history he seeks to escape.

History for the accidentalism of James is measured by its disposition to accommodate itself to the needs of geniuses; history viewed by science, i.e., in the materialistic conception, is the movement of social classes, groups, and nations, through evolving modes of production, bringing forth their parties, their spokesmen and leaders, their theoreticians and cultural exponents.

V. J. JEROME.

The third and concluding article in the series by V. J. Jerome, to appear in the forthcoming issue, will deal with the Jamesian theory of knowledge in relation to accidentalism, and will discuss the Marxian conception of accident and the individual in history.

"Poor Dr. Paradise is worried stiff for fear the Kerr Committee will find him unfit; he was once in the same state with Harry Bridges."

[3] In 1791, a full year before the signal Tenth of August when the French people began to take the tone of its St. Justs and Marats, Leopold II of Austria and Frederick William II of Prussia issued their counter-revolutionary Declaration of Pillnitz, pledging to restore by force the absolute monarchy. To this end they encouraged the massing of an enemy army, mainly of emigre noblemen and officers, at France's frontier.

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MAY DAY: MADE IN AMERICA

A QUARTER century has sped by and old Al has undoubtedly limped on to his reward, but I shall always recall him about this time of the year: the crotchety, silent loom-fixer in overalls with the wrench hanging at his side. I had just been introduced to the twentieth century mysteries of our industrial civilization in the somewhat humble post of bobbin boy in one of Pennsylvania's ancient textile mills. Old Al was a wizard with the looms and the weavers liked him although they scarcely understood his strange quips which, I suspected, they regarded as the foibles of approaching senility. Wheeling my cart about collecting empty bobbins, and still considerably bewildered by the fury of motion and clatter in the vast room which spanned a whole city block, I came upon old Al behind a loom. He stood, bemused, unaware of my presence. Upon the window panes which never let in any light, covered as they were with a thick accumulation of dust and lint, he traced with a bony forefinger the mysterious letters which spelled out "May 1." He looked up to find me staring. Hastily, he wiped his handiwork from the pane and with a quick glance around told me that he could be fired for writing that. That evening, after the bedlam of the looms died down, in that sudden silence that comes after ten hours of unmitigated roar, he told me of his youth and of his old Knights of Labor days, and of 1886, and of the world of meaning buried in the scrawl "May 1."

"It's the workingman's New Year Day," he said. "Man who works for a living starts his year on May Day."

Twenty-five May Days have passed since old Al told me that and I have come to believe he wasn't far from right. He had said, with a sweep of his arm, that nobody here understood what May Day meant, but that the time would come when they, like him, would regard the day as the year's beginning. They're a fresh crop of working people, he said, and they have a lot to learn. But learn they would, as he had learned. He was too old, now, and feeble, he indicated, to teach much, but there were younger men doing the job. May Day, he said, means freedom; it comes rightly in the springtime and all over the world it comes in the springtime and workingmen think of a better life.

I PAY homage to old Al, one of the obscure, unsung millions of America's proletarians; he crops up in my mind every time May Day rolls around. I thought of him those many May Days before the war when I saw New York's laboring men and women, many with their children perched on their shoulders, parading through the streets; I thought of him when the cables would come in from London, Moscow, Paris, and in the pre-Hitler days, Berlin, telling cryptically of the march of working men and women.

I thought of him that May Day in Barcelona when the gaily clad Spanish unionists of the UGT and CNT marched down the Calle Cortes, their banners flaming in the brilliant Mediterranean sun, a squadron of planes roaring by overhead in case the Junkers and Capronis would come on their holiday. They marched, contingent after contingent, Socialist, Republican, Communist youth—together on May Day, together against fascism. It was not hard to imagine him, standing there, watching them too, with quiet satisfaction.

I think of him today, and of the double-quick march of history that his lifetime represented. Think of it: there was no May Day before 1886, and he was already at work. In the lifetime of one man and his son, the aspirations of labor have taken form, have quickened into life, have become a reality which no man dare ignore.

And he was an American.

The first May Day American men and their families marched for an eight-hour day. (Do you know what it is to work ten, twelve, fourteen hours a day in the heat of a foundry, which the tropics cannot match?) They dreamed of ordering their life into eight hours of work, eight hours of education and play, eight hours of rest. A modest dream, but oh how revolutionary! "The first fruit of the Civil War," Karl Marx wrote in *Capital*, "was an agitation for the eight-hour day—a movement which ran with express speed from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from New England to California." And more. The dream leaped the oceans, took root in the mind of Europe. Three years later it became an international workers' holiday at the creation of the Second International in Paris. It acquired the connotation of international brotherhood; that all men, whatever their language, their nation, their color, their religion, were brothers.

TODAY, this May Day, it has infinitely more meaning than ever. The spirit of May Day belongs in the Atlantic Charter; it is implicit in the concept of United Nations; it is part of the great meaning of anti-fascist coalition; it abhors everything Hitler stands for. And it was born in America—within the lifetime of your father and mine.

Today, the sons of old Al, and all true patriots whatever their class, are engaged in the greatest endeavor of all time. And the old loom-fixer, I am certain, would be the first to say so. It is the endeavor to keep history on the track—to save it from tumbling down half a thousand years into the moldy slavery of medievalism. And within the front of national unity, the front of patriots, the sons of old Al must, as ever, shoulder the greatest burden. Old Al would have said that workingmen constitute the greatest part of our army; that workingmen create the means for their brothers and sons and all Americans in uniform to wage war. That's why they're observing May Day this year in the mills, pushing the stuff out for the fronts. We would have said, too, that their obligation is to fight with all who will stand against the barbarian; that today victory is the greatest working class demand, one that takes precedence over every other need. And that that truth must, this May Day, bring the workingmen of Britain, America, and Russia into unshatterable alliance.

I RATHER suspect I shall meet old Al again this year, as I felt him in Barcelona and on so many other May Days. He'll be standing there at the Yankee Stadium, dressed in his best Sunday clothes, most likely wearing his shiny celluloid collar, thinking, "Yes, May Day is the workingman's New Year. . . ."

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THE STATE DEPARTMENT VS. FRANCE

Joseph Starobin discusses the secret agreements reached with the Giraudists. The plan to edge the French underground out of representation. How real unity can be achieved.

SUMNER WELLES has been widely praised for his declaration on American foreign policy in his recent letter to Dr. Ralph Barton Perry of Harvard, especially for the Undersecretary's straight forwardness toward critics. Much of this praise agrees that Mr. Welles was more impressive in his approach toward the problem than in the actual content of his remarks. He did not clear up any of the mysteries in our foreign policy, but at least he gave official confirmation that these mysteries exist. I am thinking of the passage in which he himself distinguished between the "surface developments" and what he called "basic" in American policy. Welles insisted, of course, that the "surface developments" are only "temporary steps" and must not be taken for the "basic" policy. This invitation to distinguish between superficiality and reality is of great help with reference to our policy toward France.

The differences between General Giraud and the French National Committee are now a matter of public record. We have Giraud's memorandum of April 19 and the de Gaullist comment on it of April 22. Giraud's plan in essence would organize a council of overseas territories composed mainly of the colonial governors and ex-Vichy administrators in North Africa. This council would act for France, in the empire, at home, and among the United Nations. The French National Committee would disappear; the representation which the powerful underground organizations in France now have on that committee would not be honored by the Giraudist setup. The administration and leadership of the liberating armies would be in the hands of French military chiefs, presumably Giraud himself, responsible to their own agency, the overseas council.

Giraud envisages a long interim period between the beginning of the invasion and the final peace, during all of which the military leadership, dominated by the existing North African group, would rule. In the far future, when all prisoners have been returned, all exiles come home, everything restored, there would be elections for a new National Assembly which would draw up a new constitution. Vichy's legislation would be abolished, but with the same duplicity that has characterized the restoration of Jewish rights in North Africa yet at the same time deprived the Jews of their rights as French citizens.

De Gaulle comes to grips with the three main weaknesses of Giraud's plan, ignoring almost wholly its dubious postwar aspects. De Gaulle greets the renunciation of Vichy legislation, but says the men who joined in foisting that legislation on France must go. In this way, he hits out at the fact that the council of overseas territories would be packed by ex-Vichymen, the various colonial governors such as Nogues and Boisson. De Gaulle reemphasizes that the forces already carrying the burden of resistance in France itself must have representation.

And finally, as might be expected from any French republican, the de Gaullists object to any military rule in France which does not derive its powers from a central, representative, civilian agency. France has had a bitter experience with military leaders who usurp civilian political functions. It wants to avoid Bonapartism, plus another decade such as followed the defeat of 1870.

IT IS clear at a glance that very fundamental issues separate these two centers. Moreover, the very fact that they now make their positions public, in the midst of negotiation, implies a crisis or near-failure in these negotiations. It is only in deadlock that negotiators usually reveal their hand. In fact, the refusal to allow de Gaulle himself to visit North Africa and the many intimations from Algiers that the whole thing must wait until the end of the Tunisian campaign is a sign that things are not going well.

But there is one other fact of recent weeks which convinces me that the French National Committee has been forced into a very difficult position, that the French underground is in grave danger of being ignored and isolated. That fact is Anthony Eden's speech to the House of Commons upon his return from this country. Mr. Eden associated British policy completely with that of the United States as far as France, and the issues of French unity, were concerned. It is of course an old story that the British government was never too happy with the French National Committee, despite their many instances of cooperation. It is likewise well known that Churchill and de Gaulle personally have never gotten along.

But the British Foreign Minister did more than just disavow support for the de Gaullists: he deliberately went back into the pre-November 8 period and associated Britain with American policy not only toward North Africa but toward Vichy. He gave a very simple "cops and robbers" reasoning for American policy toward Vichy, namely that the United States wanted to keep a window open into Europe; moreover, by so doing, the Americans could negotiate with selected Vichymen in France and North Africa.

The sophisticated House of Commons must have been greatly puzzled by this official declaration. But the important thing is that it is official. In thinking about France, it is clear that the previous differences between British and American policy have now been liquidated. Liquidated, that is, in favor of the State Department's views.

NOW then, what shall we make of this business? What are the implications, as far as American diplomacy is concerned, in this crisis between Frenchmen? And what does this imply for the future developments in those regions, namely central Europe and Germany, where the real decisions of the great powers will be made?

My own opinion is that "military expediency" is no longer guiding American diplomacy in these affairs. Second, I do not believe the State Department wants unity between de Gaulle and Giraud except on Giraud's terms, which are its own terms, long worked out in advance. Third, the tenacity with which the State Department clings to its diplomacy is the most alarming thing of all.

There were only seven weeks of military expediency in North Africa. Those were the seven weeks in which Admiral Darlan intervened on the North African scene and sought to establish his own power. It is significant that the President's only statement on military expediency comes within those seven weeks, on November 17. But that period ended when a Royalist's bullet ended Darlan's career. If we mean by expediency what Webster means: "departure from principle to facilitate an end," then it is clear that the State Department went back to its original principles, resumed a policy in North Africa which was worked out in advance and which is still working. We learn now that it was Britain's policy also.

I mean the State Department's secret agreement with General Giraud and his colleagues, which has not received sufficient attention in this country. In the February 13 issue of *Pour La Victoire*, the French language paper here, one of its editors, Michel Pobers, wrote a leading article on this strange subject.

"It is no secret for anyone," he says "that during the long months preceding November 8 [the day North Africa was invaded] active negotiations took place be-

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tween a group of French military and civil figures with the representatives of the United States in North Africa. We will cite only one significant date: it was in February 1941 that the first memorandum, extremely detailed, was sent to the American authorities by the French group."

"These negotiations," Pobers continues, "were pursued without relaxation for seven months," then apparently interrupted and again resumed, and, "when the history of it can be published, we will be too stupefied to learn with what minuteness and precision the French and Americans worked out the modes of their future collaboration."

WHAT agreement was reached in this secret negotiation? Pobers says "It was fully understood that France's restoration, regaining everything she had before the war both in Europe and abroad would be one of the aims of the United Nations." The United States, "pledged itself not to interfere in the affairs" which "are uniquely within the scope of the national administration upon whom would fall the exercise of French sovereignty." After admitting that Darlan's unexpected appearance on the scene "temporarily suspended" this agreement, that is, the Murphy-Giraud agreement, Pobers concludes:

"The historical merit of Giraud and his collaborators will someday be seen to have consisted of this: they conceived and realized a French-American collaboration which is not simply a temporary arrangement for the war's duration but a veritable entente, powerfully projected into the future." [My italics.]

Now the language and the meaning here is precise: truly Gallic. An agreement worked out in advance between Murphy and Giraud; a pledge to consider the Giraudist "national administration" sovereign for France; a pledge to let the Giraudists do as they pleased within North Africa; finally a "veritable entente, powerfully projected into the future." And the date when this all begins is exceptionally interesting. Evidently it began before Giraud himself escaped from Germany and continued with him personally after that.

I would not ordinarily credit such testimony, although if anyone should know what the Giraudists stand for, it is this Pobers. Nor is it conclusive that he published his article after conferences with Gen. Emile Bethouart, Giraud's commissioner in Washington, and after discussions with Le Maigre Dubreuil, that sinister Cagoulard who visited here during the winter and who has now taken a back seat in Algiers.

The interesting thing is that Edgar Ansel Mowrer, since his resignation from the Office of War Information has again and again in the New York *Post* and *PM*

Pierre Laval

referred to this agreement. While Mowrer often speaks with pique there is no doubt that he knows a great deal of the inside story. It is also characteristic that whenever our Secretary of State is asked about the American "occupation" of North Africa he objects to the term "occupation." He insists that our troops are there as instruments of an Allied power, functioning in Allied territory. This is not just a gracious gesture: Hull wishes to imply the complete sovereignty of the Giraudists in North Africa, a sovereignty conferred by our long-standing agreement. That Giraud himself adheres to this is clear from his whole memorandum, from the fact that in his most recent decrees and legal documents he has begun to speak in the name of the French republic.

ON THE other hand, the de Gaullist French National Committee has been rebuffed as a repository of French sovereignty. For the very real reason of our previous commitment, the de Gaullists are always referred to as a "grouping" or a "faction," with de Gaulle as the factional or "ambitious" leader. Of course, the ironical and double-dealing aspect of this is that we do consider the "defense of the territories of the Free French vital to the defense of the United States." In fact, the United States signed an agreement to give lend-lease help to the Free French in November 1941. In brief, the French National Committee are just a bunch of fellows who happened to be in exile after the armistice of 1940. Where they control territories vital to the war effort, especially in the colonial periphery, we do business with them. But when they are in the wrong places, namely France itself, they are expected to subordinate themselves to our previous unilateral agreement with General Giraud. And this is a unilateral agreement. Even now, it is only an Anglo-American agreement. Although Pobers says our guarantee that France's restoration (under Giraud) will be one of the "aims of the United Nations," it is important to remember that the Soviet Union and many other members of the coalition have had no part in this whole affair.

The question of sovereignty is not a mere legal issue. If one is going to be legalistic, then Marshal Petain stands on the best legal ground. He insists, and until November 8 the United States agreed with him, that his was the sovereign regime because the two Chambers of the French Parliament voted him all power in July 1940.

I don't want to go into that sordid story, but there is only one other way of determining French sovereignty: that is to base it on the people and traditions of France itself, the people who have been daily, stubbornly, systematically carrying forth the struggle against the invader and his accomplices, a struggle which is already taking on military forms.

Sovereign France is fighting France, the people who are fighting the invader and the traitors. The people express themselves through their organizations. These organizations have long ago given their full support to de Gaulle and the French National Committee, and it is clear from reports of popular feeling in Casablanca, Algiers, Sfax, Sousse, and Kairouan that de Gaullism is extremely popular with the French masses both on the mainland and in the colonial empire.

At the very least, there is no basis for the State Department's insistence that its own unilateral agreement with Giraud must be the charter of unity among French patriots. If it is argued that de Gaulle is not a sovereign leader, then neither is Giraud: then they had best get together as equals. Equality implies inclusion of the most important elements of the French National Committee, the underground, and popular representatives. Nor are these only Communists. They are Socialist, trade union, and Republican forces.

WE CAN now dispose of a number of confusing shibboleths. "Military expediency" is not the issue. Nor is the issue a question of "politics." Political unity and clarity is not an extraneous matter here: it is the heart of the matter. It comes in ill-grace for the North African ex-Vichymen to be considered "above politics," while the charge of "politics" is made against de Gaulle and the underground. To "lay aside politics" means to place unity for immediate action above previous and secret agreements, and above future rivalries. Giraud has a long way to go on this score.

This is not an argument over irrelevant postwar matters, either. In fact, the de

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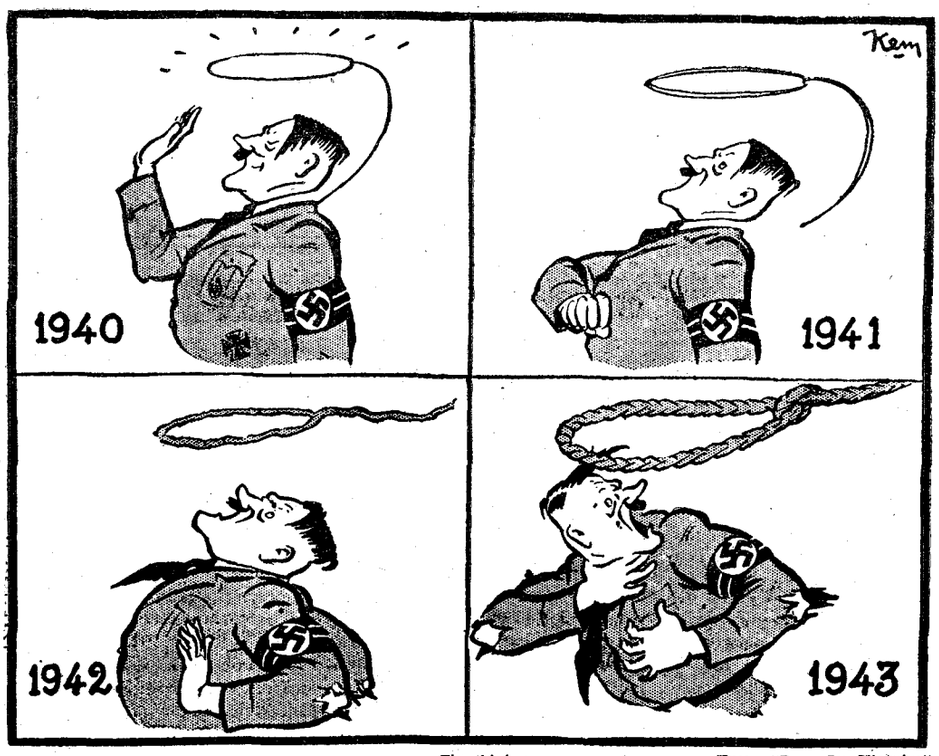

The Halo — From "Pour La Victoire"

Gaullist comment on Giraud's memorandum ignores all the elaborate machinery for postwar elections, etc., as irrelevant. *The truth is that in the name of "letting the people of France decide their own future," the North African crowd is trying to adhere to agreements "powerfully projected into the future" which have already been reached with London and Washington.* In the guise of "letting the people choose when the war is over," they are trying to force through an essentially military rule of dubious characters *in the present*, in such a way as to prejudice the future choice of the French people itself.

In the republican tradition, there is a deep antipathy to the rule of the generals. One day in 1918 when Marshal Foch remarked to Clemenceau: "You know, I am not subject to your orders," the Old Tiger replied sharply: "I don't know where you got that idea but I advise you to forget it." Emile Bure, who tells that story in a recent issue of the *Nation*, adds: "He knew that the military leaders, for the most part sons of noble families, educated in the religious schools, consented only reluctantly to work with the Republican ministers, secretly regretting that they could not eliminate them altogether." I am not making a defense of the Third Republic, but it is clear that in the work of liberating France the cards must not be stacked against republican traditions and the right of the French people to do as they please in the future. Giraud's plan would certainly stack the cards; in fact, he would have the whole deck up his sleeve.

The basic question is the immediate question of the best possible mobilization of France today for today's struggle against the enemy. A successful offensive into France depends on real unity of all French forces. But such unity must be equitable; the popular forces must get their full share of leadership within the framework of republican and anti-Vichy traditions. Otherwise, how can you really mobilize France to assist the Allied invasion? How can you eliminate strife within French ranks and direct all energies against the enemy?

And why is the situation alarming? It is alarming because our State Department has pursued its objectives in North Africa with such cunning, has so cunningly invested the ex-Vichy crew with a semblance of French sovereignty. Our State Department has so skillfully sought to isolate de Gaulle, to break up his National Committee, to prevent unity on the basis of equality for all patriotic forces.

The alarming thing is that the State Department declines to bend, to adjust itself to new circumstances, but persists in its policies even though our democratic tradition is thereby compromised and our whole fight against the Axis made so difficult.

The alarming thing is *not* that the State Department wishes to deal with conservatives in North Africa or in Europe. In a coalition of this kind, it is inevitable that Britain and the United States should wish to deal with conservative elements. I for one have no illusions on that score, and that is not the point.

The decisive thing is that when the State Department faces a situation, as in France, where vital centers of national will are expressed through progressives, through Socialists, and Communists, the State Department tenaciously refuses to recognize these forces. In fact, it tries to impose people of its own selection in place of, and at the expense of, people in whom France itself has expressed confidence.

WHAT can the possible outcome of such bull-headedness be?

First, fear of the people of France can only delay our military action. No doubt this fear of France is the main factor for our delay thus far in opening the second front. This fear has inspired plans for invading Europe from every direction except the simple and logical way across the English Channel. But where will the policy of pushing Giraud and wrecking de Gaulle lead? Will it not lead precisely to that popular conflict within France which the State Department fears above all else? Isn't it clear that the longer the second front is delayed, the greater the efforts to pre-arrange the leadership and conditions of the invasion against the will of France, the greater the chances that such leaders will not command the allegiance of the French masses?

The fact is that the popular forces, in France as everywhere else, wish to avoid civil war when this war is over. They have had enough of bloodshed and violence. The violence in Europe today is a Nazi-created violence and the best channel for the expression of popular vengeance is against the Nazis and their accomplices, and that popular vengeance is absolutely inevitable. It would be best for ourselves, for the French and every one if that vengeance takes place in an organized fashion alongside of, and in concert with, the Allied armies opening up a second front.

But if American diplomacy continues its course, the inevitable result will be that the necessary anti-Hitler violence will be spent in unnecessary and criminal conflicts among patriotic anti-Hitler Frenchmen. What the State Department had sought to avoid, it will have in fact brought about.

Herein lies the great challenge of our policy. Refusal to recognize all forces carrying on the fight, especially those who have carried it on in the most difficult circumstances is not only immoral but, if such terms have no meaning in diplomacy, it is impractical. Perhaps that will appeal to our pragmatic diplomats. It won't work, gentlemen. It will boomerang. It will backfire.

Bismarck, of the blood and iron diplomacy, once remarked that "politics is the art of the possible." We are now in the expensive and dangerous phase of the State Department's education on what is possible and what is not possible in Europe.

I have no doubt that the State Department will not be able to sell America's war aims short, that the people of Europe will have a democratic and people's victory in this war. What I fear is the high cost of the State Department's education.

JOSEPH STAROBIN.

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UNDERMINING THE FEPC

The southern bourbons' campaign to destroy the new harmony of black and white workers. The hearings that never came off.

WHAT has happened to the President's Fair Employment Practice Committee? So many people keep asking. So many Americans—Negroes, Jews, Mexicans—the foreign-born—need to know. For they had been told by the President himself in his Executive Order 8802 that the FEPC was their strong defense against the undemocratic discrimination which still stands in the way of their giving all they've got to a war for democracy. Understaffed and handicapped as the FEPC was, these people believed that it would some day get around to blasting all the barriers to their full participation in the fighting and the producing. Believing in America they couldn't help believing that. Were they fooled?

Three months of nothing happening pass mighty slowly when people need to know. America's so-called minorities have been waiting that long since Manpower Commissioner McNutt overruled all seven members of the FEPC and called off the public hearing on railroad discrimination against Negroes, scheduled for late January. This action, we have since learned, rested upon more than just McNutt's own judgment, though he undoubtedly contributed his two-bits' worth to this domestic Munich. We know, for example, that Attorney General Biddle had been devoting close attention to "the alarming growth of racial tension" during the weeks just before the hushing up of the FEPC hearing.

Reversing Chairman Malcolm S. MacLean and his eminent colleagues without so much as a pretense at prior consultation, the McNutt order destroyed at one blow all the FEPC's high prestige as a presidential body. Labor, progressive and minority organizations were thunderstruck by an official knuckling-under to reactionary pressure rendered all the more abject by McNutt's refusal to explain it. Less surprise was felt by those few on the inside who were well acquainted with the private preparations for a public surrender which had been going on ever since the southern regional hearing at Birmingham seven months before.

THE Birmingham hearing last June climaxed a series of regional hearings held by the FEPC during its first year to show the nationwide extent of discrimination and to put the nation on notice that the administration was really determined to stop it. Throttled down by a shamefully inadequate budget of $80,000 for all its operations, the FEPC nevertheless was extraordinarily successful in floodlighting abuses and in making clear that they could be corrected in perfectly workable ways. Accused by certain elements of trying to bring about impossible social changes in the midst of war, the members of the FEPC never forgot there was a war on. Their controlling objective was to win it in the shortest possible time through enlisting the total powers of all our people.

The truth is that the FEPC was making such substantial progress toward this objective—despite all the handicaps—that the enemies of democracy at home mobilized to put a stop to it. They have succeeded, at least temporarily. Whether the FEPC gets started again is up to the people—the whole people—not just the minority pressure groups immediately hit by FEPC's disappearance.

The Birmingham hearing started the FEPC on its slow decline. Why? Not, as some fair-weather southern liberals contend, because the FEPC "meddled with dynamite," "tried to go too fast," "stirred up the latent race-hate of the southern white worker" and the rest of the obscurantist patter. On the contrary, the Birmingham hearing showed up this immemorial hokum too dramatically and proved that the southern white worker was psychologically ready to take seven-league strides toward granting the Negro a fair economic break. This is what really terrified the white supremacy mob and their corporate backers.

A veteran Birmingham iron-molder and AFL organizer, John Busby, speaking not for the progressive but the more conservative wing of southern trade unionists on the hearing's opening day, exploded the race-scare which Governor Dixon and the carpet-bag industrialists had tried to pump up beforehand. "That old bugaboo," Busby said contemptuously, "was created after they struck the shackles from the Negro."

"We woke up and found that they had welded one end around his neck and the other end around my neck," he went on, "and instead of having chattel slaves, we became industrial slaves, and then they said that we should not work together, should not do certain things, we should be prejudiced, and we found out it was for the purpose of holding down the wage system."

Though the hearing brought out evidence of discriminatory practices on the part of AFL metal trades unions in Mobile, New Orleans, and Nashville as well as the building trades in several southern cities, most witnesses representing these bodies showed themselves desperately anxious to "get right," promising to integrate Negroes in the future. The dominant chord of labor testimony at the hearing was that struck by Busby at the outset. The hearing fittingly adjourned with the reading of a communication to the FEPC from Alton Lawrence, coordinator of organization for the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers (CIO) in the Birmingham district. Hailing "these first FEPC hearings in the deep South as a history-making contribution to the nation's war effort," Lawrence said he was expressing not merely the "overwhelming sentiment" of his own union's membership but that of "the membership of labor generally, both AFL and CIO, in this area."

The Alabama CIO and AFL in their annual conventions shortly before the hearing had each answered Governor Dixon and his fellow-agitators of race-hate by passing strong resolutions in favor of granting equality of opportunity to Negro workers. This refusal to be stampeded by "that old bugaboo"—plus the demonstration of labor and inter-racial unity at the FEPC hearing—threw a scare into the reactionary South such as it has not known since the Ku Klux counter-revolution rubbed out the social gains of the Civil War. The Dixons, Talmadges, Rankins, and Starnes could foresee what lay beyond the crumbling of caste lines dividing Negro and white in industry: abolition of the poll-tax, a successful drive against the white primary, political control by the common people from the Potomac to the Rio Grande, a curb on exploitation of the region's human and natural resources by northern monopolists.

Further alarming to the reactionaries was the failure of the Alabama press—except for a few stooge organs and rotten borough weeklies—to pick up the false scent they had laid across the plain trail toward victory through unity. Among the papers endorsing the hearing without qualification were the Birmingham *Age-Herald*, the Birmingham *News*, the Anniston *Times*—whose editor was president of the Alabama Press Association—and the Montgomery *Advertiser*, a sheet so staid and rooted in the past that it bears the nickname "Grandma." There was nothing to fear from the FEPC, the *Advertiser* told its readers in the ultra-conservative Black Belt, but plenty, it inferred, from Governor Dixon and his corporation friends in Birmingham and Mobile. It warned that "the only cause for fear is the activity of the unscrupulous within our midst who would attempt to panic the rest of us, even as Hitler made use of the Jews and Communists to achieve his ends."

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The Birmingham hearing was carried through without any untoward incident despite the presence of two Negroes, Earl Dickerson and Milton P. Webster, among the FEPC members occupying the bench in the Federal district courtroom and an audience of which Negroes made up at least a half on all three days of the hearing. The local press carried fair and detailed accounts of the proceedings. In fact, the FEPC got a better local press at Birmingham than at the previous Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York hearings. Chairman MacLean was received at the White House upon his return to Washington as if he had performed some sort of miracle rather than simply revealed the real state of feeling in the South. For the White House had been worked on in advance by the forces which dreaded the exposure. Visions of riot and bloodshed, of mutilated victims hanging from Birmingham lamp-posts, were conjured up to persuade the President that the hearing should be called off. But he stood firm beforehand. It was a couple of weeks afterward that the counter-attack got really rolling.

This struck in the form of a back-door ultimatum to the administration—subscribed to, it is believed, by the leaders of the southern Democratic contingent in Congress—that the FEPC had to be put on ice or they would bolt the party in a body. Governor Dixon later made this threat publicly, in a speech to the Southerners' Club in New York, while not so long ago Gov. Sam Jones of Louisiana attempted to give respectable currency to the ideas of resurgent southern secessionism—or fascism—in a *Saturday Evening Post* article that received wide notice and even acclaim in northern reactionary circles.

The administration bowed to the southern ultimatum, though the extent of the capitulation was not fully manifest for months. On August 1, the FEPC was transferred into the War Manpower Commission and made subject to the "direct supervision" of McNutt. This step was taken without prior consultation with or even notification to its members, who had previously been promised independent status in the Executive Office of the President, adequate funds and personnel and an enlarged jurisdiction, including even the policing of discrimination in the armed forces. To the alarmed outcries of labor and minority organizations which feared the transfer to WMC meant reduction of the FEPC to a role of impotence, the President replied that the action had been taken with "the intention to strengthen—not to submerge—the Committee, and to reinvigorate—not to repeal—Executive Order 8802."

This commitment from the President did not deter McNutt and his subordinates on down the line from carrying out systematic sabotage of the FEPC so childish and petty that it would seem ludicrous were it not for the great and tragic issues involved. By obscure bureaucratic means the FEPC's operations were crossed up, diluted with floods of useless paperwork, checkmated in Washington and the field. Still the FEPC stubbornly struggled to fulfill its obligations.

John Beecher

Immediately following the Birmingham hearing, the FEPC squared away to expose discrimination against citizens of Mexican origin in the Southwest. A field office was opened in El Paso and FEPC investigators dug into evidence, most of which had been assembled by the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, showing the vicious discrimination practiced against Mexicans by the big copper companies in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. Though the Mexican Labor Minister strongly endorsed these hearings on behalf of his government as a concrete implementation of the Good Neighbor policy, the State Department hushed them up, alleging that the Mexican government feared they might disturb Pan-American amity. It is understood that the real pressure on the State Department came from the Phelps-Dodge Copper Corporation and other discriminatory producers. No announcement of the hearing's cancellation was ever made. Like the railroad hearing later, it was simply "postponed" and the El Paso office closed.

Its prestige damaged by the southwestern capitulation, the morale of its members and staff undermined by the long months of stalemate in the WMC, the FEPC has virtually fallen to pieces since McNutt administered the *coup de grace* by calling off the railroad hearing. Chairman MacLean, Mark Ethridge, and David Sarnoff have resigned from the Committee and have not been replaced. FEPC attorneys Henry Epstein—former solicitor general of New York State—and Charles Houston also resigned. Various names have been put forward and various schemes for reorganization have been bruited about in the intervening three months, but at this writing nothing has crystallized. Biddle, it is believed, has prepared an innocuous substitute for the old committee which would employ such straightforward techniques as public hearings only "as a last resort."

THE FEPC had also scheduled hearings at Detroit, Cleveland, St. Louis, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. Acting FEPC Chairman Earl Dickerson, Chicago alderman, has just announced that the Committee intends to proceed with these, beginning with Detroit on May 24 and 25. His announcement was unsanctioned by McNutt and, up to this writing, the OWI has refused to release it as official. The decision to proceed with hearings was unanimous on the part of the remaining FEPC members who, in addition to Dickerson, are John Brophy of the CIO, Boris Shishkin of the AFL, and Milton P. Webster of the Sleeping Car Porters. It is to be hoped that their action will prove to be more than a brave gesture, though another McNutt veto would not be surprising. A field investigation office has been collecting evidence of discrimination in the Detroit area for several months. No offices have been opened in the other four cities where hearings are to be held and, so far as is known, not even preliminary investigations have been started. The government fiscal year runs out June 30. After that date, it is said, the FEPC will have to operate on such funds as Congress can be induced to appropriate. Hitherto such small support as it has had has come from the President's contingent fund.

Since the blow-up in January, Frank P. Graham, president of the University of North Carolina and War Labor Board member; Oscar L. Chapman, Assistant Secretary of the Interior; and others have been urged to accept the FEPC chairmanship but have quite understandably declined it. Without determined administration support—meaning independence, sufficient funds, personnel, authority to schedule and go through with hearings, punitive powers—the chairman's job would be a political suicide mission. It seems safe to predict that no first class candidate can be induced to accept it until the secret deal with the southern congressional bloc is repudiated and the administration at last decides to put into effect an anti-discrimination policy which is on the up and up.

The American people have shown their readiness to back up a strong policy through the CIO, AFL, Federal Council of Churches, National Catholic Welfare Council and a host of other organizations including those representing all the major minority groups. The unity of protest following McNutt's calling off the railroad hearing was one of the most impressive and heartening domestic developments of the war. It must be renewed. Such unity cannot be withstood by the handful of fascist-minded men who have been stalling the progress of democracy on the home front.

JOHN BEECHER.

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DEWEY INNOCENCE

New York's Republican governor, the baby boy with Hoover's eyes. . . . Simon Gerson analyzes Dewey's political finaglings and his hopes for the '44 Republican presidential nomination.

ONE of the yarns that made the rounds during the last fall elections was that when Thomas E. Dewey visited headquarters his campaign workers would whisper: "There but for the grace of God—goes God." Probably it was only a snide opposition tale but it did indicate a feeling in Republican circles that they had a Man of Destiny on their hands. And Thomas Edmund did little to dispel the illusion.

Now that Dewey is governor of the largest state in the Union and casting sheeps eyes at the White House there has been a growth of the uneasy feeling that a Great Man is about. Hence the closer scrutiny of the associations and record of the forty-one-year-old young man from Owosso, Mich. For even men of destiny must determine their fates on the basis of real forces, choose paths, find allies, and secure social bases. It is in an examination of his decisions on these matters that the real Dewey emerges.

His background is by now well known, the newspapers, campaign biographers, and movies having done nobly by him. Son of a publisher, Dewey attended the University of Michigan and Columbia Law School. In his salad days he worked in various and properly respectable downtown law firms and first saw the gleam of political dawn as an assistant US attorney under George Z. Medalie.

The big break of his life came when in 1935 Democratic Gov. Herbert Lehman had to choose a special rackets prosecutor to supersede a hopelessly inept, if not worse, Tammany district attorney of New York County. A number of leading Republican lawyers—it is the tradition in such matters to turn things over to a member of the opposite political party—politely but firmly rejected the proposition. Thomas, however, was willin'.

From that point on, your little Joey can tell you the story straight out of the comic strip. Aided by canny advisers and a helpful press, Dewey became a gang-buster of national reputation. True that a number of the service industries were cleaned up with the aid of progressive trade unionists who had selflessly fought racketeering for years without benefit of newspaper aid, but Dewey never mentions that phase of the matter.

BE THAT as it may, Dewey was elected District Attorney in 1937 as a running mate of Mayor LaGuardia on the Republican, Fusion, and American Labor Party tickets. Taking office Jan. 1, 1938, he promptly began to look longingly at Albany. That summer he was nominated by the Republican convention but was nosed out of victory on Election Day by less than 65,000 votes. However, Dewey, by that time thirty-six, began to covet the 1940 presidential nomination. Henchmen were dispatched to all four corners of the nation and a goodly body of delegates were lined up. Came Philadelphia and Dewey led at the first ballot but faded quickly as the Willkie convention drive got under way in earnest, with the late Kenneth Simpson of New York splitting the home state delegation and beginning the stampede toward Willkie.

It was during his futile drive for the GOP nomination in 1939-40 that the usually ultra-cautious Dewey was compelled to speak up on a number of vital national and international questions. After all, the country was getting rather bored with the exploits of a county prosecutor. You could squeeze so much and no more out of the Lucky Luciano and Jimmy Hines trials. Boomed by the Hearst and Scripps-Howard chains, Dewey smote the New Deal hip and thigh, terming it "the mess that's been made in the last seven years" (Dec. 9, 1939) and assailing the "bureaucracy of so-called administrators who have harassed and bedeviled every field of enterprise" (Jan. 23, 1940). His war position had a certain geographic quality—isolationist in the West, interventionist in the East. In an assault on the New Deal he demanded in language which endeared him to the New York *Daily News* the "avoidance of foreign entanglements." He attacked the administration in terms borrowed from Martin Dies, demanding the elimination from public life of "Socialists, Communists, and fellow travelers . . . for government departments are plentifully sprinkled with subversive activities." (May 27, 1940).

His attitude toward the Soviet Union was expressed in a speech before a Republican women's group in New York on Jan. 20, 1940, and is sheer Hooverism. In an all-out attack on the Roosevelt administration's Soviet policy Dewey said: "It has recently been revealed that within the past year the administration seriously considered still another deal with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In a futile attempt to avert war, it actually explored the possibilities of a fantastic partnership with Russia . . . we need no such partnerships. . . ."

Not only did Dewey oppose an alliance with the Soviet Union for the object of collective security—that alliance which is a cornerstone of our national policy today and which, according to Roosevelt, Wallace, and Willkie, must remain a cornerstone—but in the same speech he attacked even *recognition*. Incredible? Read the exact words: "Insofar as the present administration has adhered to the policies of its predecessors, it has met with the general approval of the American people, but it has occasionally strayed from the path. A conspicuous and most unfortunate departure was the recognition by the New Deal of Soviet Russia."

No such reference to America's recognition of Franco Spain appeared in that or any other speech. Nor has Dewey ever urged breaking relations with Mannerheim Finland. From his definitive statement on the Soviet Union it can only be concluded that the above-quoted passage represents the basic views of the New York governor toward the 200,000,000 people and the government of our leading ally. He has made no statement since January 1940 modifying the views stated then.

His most important speeches before and since election indicate a lip service to the war effort but significantly omit the very terms "Axis," "fascism," "Nazi Germany," etc. Concerning the need for a land offensive in Europe to smash the heart of the Axis he has said absolutely nothing. While refraining from the Wheeler-Lindbergh type of America First phraseology, Dewey is painfully careful to avoid anything which would definitely align him against the Tafts, Wheelers, Vandenbergs, et al.

MOST of his rhetoric is reserved for attacks on Washington. "Free enterprise" and "states rights" are the banners under which Dewey marches to war on Washington. He loses no opportunity to echo the National Association of Manufacturers' line on "free enterprise," utilizing every occasion to link extensive federally financed public works with "totalitarianism."

"We must not fall into the error of assuming that public works are a substitute for the enterprise of a free society," he told the Legislature in his message of January 6.

"Except in a totalitarian society, public works can never be more than a small percentage of the activity of a nation."

The governor practices what he preaches, too. The Republican-controlled Legislature "forgot" to pass a $135,000,000 postwar public housing bill but did pass the Hampton Redevelopment Bill, which gives powerful insurance companies the right to invest in housing with a quar-

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ter century of tax exemption on the buildings. Passage of the Hampton bill was promptly followed by the announcement—surprise, surprise!—that the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. was speeding plans for a $40,000,000 housing development on the East Side of New York City with 30,000 apartments at rents double those now paid by the occupants of the area. Critics insist that this is a typical end result of Dewey's anti-public works bias.

Hammering at the theme that Washington, not Berlin, Tokyo, or Rome, is the enemy of our liberties, Dewey on April 9 told the regional meeting of the Council of State Governors in New York that the main job before Americans is to restore popular sovereignty to the various states. That, he insisted, was an urgent question that could not be postponed for postwar discussion; it was, he declaimed, a question of "the most efficient way to win the war." In accents that will echo in anti-New Deal hearts in Georgia and Alabama, he asked: "Shall we permit the continuance of the totalitarian trend in our country?"

But Dewey by no means confines his political wooing to big business and the middle class. He is building a series of fences to the labor movement, particularly to the most conservative section of the AFL. In his message to the Legislature, he shed crocodile tears over labor's new difficulties. "Organized labor faces a difficult crisis in our country today," he said. "In large measure the forms of free collective bargaining have been superseded by regulations governing hours, wages, and conditions of employment promulgated by the federal government. . . . For the time being, labor unions are finding their whole purpose virtually regulated out of existence."

Undoubtedly this was a bid to the Woll-Hutcheson AFL forces, who are bitter craft union partisans, as well as others unfriendly to the Wagner act and other federal regulations. Dewey's reiterations that free labor can exist only in a "free economy" are efforts to hitch the wagon of organized labor to the Hooverite "free economy" star, and to drive a wedge between the Roosevelt war administration and the organized labor movement. Dewey is also playing footsy with the David Dubinsky wing of the American Labor Party. There has been contact between the two forces during and since the election campaign and considerable talk of appointments of right wing ALP leaders to various state posts. Shortly after election Dubinsky was named by the governor to a committee to investigate the alleged decline of business in New York City. Obediently enough, Dubinsky and his fellow committeemen turned in a report assigning, among other reasons, the high wages in New York City as a factor for the so-called exodus of business. The report, needless to say, was lauded in conservative circles.

Dewey's legislative program stressed slogans like "economy," "efficiency," "streamlining," and put the emphasis on structural changes. Shortly after taking office he forced through passage of a series of fiscal bills which moved up the budget year and initiated a series of other minor tax reforms. Greek to most laymen, the change in the fiscal year benefited Dewey politically by obscuring the total surplus left him by the Lehman administration. The governor anticipates a surplus of $70,000,000—on which he is sitting very firmly—widely conceded to be a legacy from Governor Lehman's administration.

His proudest achievement of the brief legislative session, which was always under control, was the adoption of the first reapportionment bill in twenty-six years. This new law, the constitutionality of which is being challenged in the courts, gives some added measure of justice to the heavily populated downstate area, but has been so rigged as to perpetuate Republican control of the Legislature and cheats the people of Harlem out of the possibility of electing a Negro state senator. (Purpose of the latter move was to secure State Sen. Frederic R. Coudert, Jr., Republican bigwig and legal representative of the Vichy regime, against possible defeat.) The reapportionment measure tends to vest party control of both major parties in the downstate area since members of the State Committee are named from assembly districts.

WHILE gang-busting has been laid aside temporarily, Dewey is keeping a number of investigations popping simultaneously, with probes into the state mental hygiene institutions and the workmen's compensation division of the Department of Labor. There is also considerable talk of a dramatic inquiry into the O'Connell machine of Albany County.

Meanwhile, an aura of reform is kept about Capitol Hill, with ostentatious investigation of would-be office-holders by the state police, much to the chagrin of Republican county bosses, who moan audibly at the bar of the Hotel Ten Eyck about this unheard-of procedure. However, despite these concessions to the goo-goos (political patois for the good government crowd), Dewey is somewhat less than saintly in the manner of filling most of the lesser offices, which uniformly go to party hacks, particularly those not suspect of contact with Wendell Willkie. In one instance, Dewey created a lucrative job for one Harry Miles, secretary of the Albany County Republican organization, after Miles had been passed over for a higher job—and had squawked long and loud.

Dewey's hold on the Republican machine is firm, what with a state full of patronage in his hat and four years of power ahead of him. Dewey is interested in far more than having Republican legislative leaders jump through the Albany hoop; he has his eye on the 1944 Republican convention. Whether or not he is a candidate, he intends to control New York State's ninety-two delegates—nearly one-fifth the number necessary to nominate—and see that Mr. Willkie doesn't get a look-in. Dewey's hard-fisted policy in respect to the machine arises out of his deadly fear of Willkie and everything that Willkie stands for. If it is up to Mr. Dewey, there will be no repetition of Philadelphia's untoward events.

In fine, the record reminds one of bleak Hooverism, but Dewey and his advisers are more subtle than to try to put over a crude imitation of the Great Engineer. Dewey's policies are fundamentally the same as Hoover's, but Dewey seeks to put them over in different ways. He understands that he is the governor of the most progressive state in the Union, with a most powerful labor movement and nearly 500,000 Labor Party and Communist Party supporters. Also, he is acutely conscious of the prestige of two of his fellow New Yorkers—Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie. Hence, he has followed a policy of occasional concessions to labor, like the $2,500,000 appropriation for child care centers, $5,000,000 raise for civil service wage-earners, and the elimination of the usual raft of anti-labor bills. Of the 3,732 bills and resolutions introduced into the State Legislature, virtually none could be termed directly anti-labor, in contrast with the many anti-labor bills introduced in the Republican-controlled Legislatures of Ohio and California. The anti-labor crowd raised its head for a brief ugly moment with the invitation to Eddie Rickenbacker, but was slapped down so hard by the trade union movement that no such experiment was repeated.

Dewey has consistently tried to cut corners on controversial legislation, burying most anti-discrimination bills, but passing one minor one, and agreeing to the adoption of a memorial to Congress for passage of HR 7, the Marcantonio anti-poll tax bill. For the record, the Legislature adopted a brief resolution calling for international collaboration and hailing the Red Army on its twenty-fifth anniversary. However, the Dewey steamroller put over the $115,000 appropriation for extending the life of the notorious Rapp-Coudert committee.

All of which adds up to a complex picture, but the basic motif is clear: Mr. Dewey is part of the Hoover-Landon crowd and is associated with the fundamental concepts of that group. He is anti-Willkie and in opposition to the whole global outlook of Willkieism. If he is not yet a highly vocal part of the nation's pro-appeasement group, chalk that up to political astuteness. Mr. Dewey's heart may belong to daddy Hoover but he's not wearing it on his sleeve. Deweyism is Hooverism, but it's the 1943 model—high-powered, streamlined, and chrome-plated. It's slick, too slick.

S. W. GERSON.

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READERS' FORUM

On a Soviet Ship

To New Masses: Here is a brief account of a recent evening on a Soviet ship that might interest your readers. We arrived about twilight at the pier where a Soviet merchant vessel was undergoing a few minor but necessary repairs before sailing back with a cargo to the Soviet Union. In our party there were Ben Hecht, the author; Georges Schreiber, the artist; Joshua White, a Negro musician, and several others. The captain of the boat met us as we came on board and at once took us to his stateroom.

Everything was quite informal. The captain was not even in uniform. He was a young, alert-looking man of forty-three by the name of Ivan Piir. We chatted in his cabin for almost an hour, asking him about his life and his ship. After a while we walked down to the officers' dining room where we met the other officers and sat down to one of those sumptuous Russian meals with caviar, vodka, borscht, and the rest. It was a very jolly, leisurely dinner with toasts to the Red Army, the Soviet people, the American people, and so on.

Theodore Bayer and Jessica Smith of *Soviet Russia Today* and the young first secretary of the Soviet consulate, Mr. Okov, were kept busy acting as interpreters. At one point we all drank a toast to the Russian stewardess who was serving us, and she filled up a glass of vodka and drank a toast to us.

About halfway through dinner Valentina Orlikova, who had been occupied with her regular duties as third mate, came in and sat down to eat.

Orlikova, whom some of us had seen at public functions, was dressed as usual in her dark blue uniform. She is a small, wiry, slender woman with unwavering blue eyes and as pretty as can be. She gives an impression of immense vitality. Orlikova was born in Vladivostok in 1915 and early started training to become a marine engineer. After the war began she first served as mate on a hospital ship in the Baltic Sea, which was torpedoed with loss of life and many wounded.

Her husband, also a Soviet merchant officer, she has seen only once, for a few hours, since June 1941. Their baby son, less than a year old when Hitler attacked, she has not seen at all since that time. He was with her husband's parents in a Nazi-occupied district near Leningrad. Orlikova does not know if her baby is still alive.

After dessert Joshua White played American songs on his guitar and the rest of us joined in the singing whenever we knew the words. Valentina Orlikova called for the US Marine song, "From the Halls of Montezuma to the Shores of Tripoli," which she especially likes. Then we toured the ship, visiting Mrs. Orlikova's cabin, the engine room, the crew's mess-hall and the crew's quarters. The cabins of the seamen were clean and fairly large, with two men to a room. They were obviously more livable than the quarters of ordinary seamen on American or British merchant ships.

Later we went to the spacious recreation hall of the boat where most of the officers and crew gradually assembled. Each of the American guests was introduced and received enthusiastic hand-clapping. Then our friend Josh White again took up his guitar and played his songs. After that one of the Soviet sailors sat down at the piano and played some of his own compositions. About ten of the crew acted as a chorus, singing with great verve and sensitiveness. Every Russian seems to be a natural-born singer.

During one of the pauses in the music the stewardess who had served our dinner appeared in a sailor suit and did a spirited Russian dance. Then Orlikova stood in front of the piano and recited a short poem entitled: "In Defense of Little People." The idea was that though small persons, yes, are small, yet they can be strong, quick, and useful. Also there are certain unique advantages in smallness. Since your heart is not large, you avoid complications because it does not have room for more than one lover. And if a wife proves a burden to her husband, how much better for him that the burden should not be heavy! Orlikova rendered her piece with a tender smile and a charming manner.

After Orlikova one of the sailors recited a fiery war poem he had written. This was indeed a crew of artistic talents. Each member of it, too, had poise and individuality. Altogether it was as handsome, healthy, and vigorous a group of men and women as I had ever seen.

There were eight women altogether in the crew of seventy. One of them is the ship's doctor, who is also the English teacher. The sailors are very keen on learning English and met with her nearly every evening for this purpose on the long voyage from Murmansk to the United States.

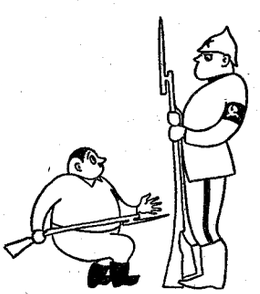
This crew is just a good, average sample of the people of Soviet Russia. There are millions like them back in the USSR, millions just like them who have given their lives in fighting Hitler. I wish that all America could have been present at the party to meet our warm, friendly, likable Russian allies.

Time slipped by very quickly and it was eleven o'clock before we knew it. We went back to the captain's cabin to pick up our coats. The captain produced some whiskey in small tumblers and we drank our farewell toasts.

Captain Piir and third mate Orlikova shook hands with us as we started down the gangplank. I said goodbye and Orlikova said, "Don't forget us, will you?"

I said, "We never will."

New York. Corliss Lamont.



USA-USSR Relations

In "New Masses" of April 13 and April 27 we printed several statements of prominent Americans in answer to four questions regarding USA-USSR relations: (1) What in your estimation is the status of American-Soviet relations? (2) What obstacles do you feel must be overcome in order to strengthen the ties between both countries? (3) What bearing do you think the question of a second front has on relations between Washington and Moscow? (4) In the light of present American-Soviet relations what do you think our government's attitude toward Finland should be?

A few replies either came too late to be included in the symposium published, or had to be omitted for lack of space. We are therefore printing some of them below. Others will follow in future issues.

To New Masses: It is obvious that there are those in our country, particularly in the State Department, who have long encouraged a hostile attitude toward the USSR. In spite of them, the warmth and cordiality of the relations between the American people and those of the Soviet Union are constantly increasing.

Anything less than the closest relations between the Soviet Union and the United States imperils the victory of the United Nations over fascist barbarism and medievalism. Any barriers between our two countries are essentially superficial in character despite the difference in our political and economic systems. In all history no two countries ever had more to gain from each other than do the USA and the USSR. The closest relations with the mighty Soviet Union guarantee, today and tomorrow, our effectiveness as a nation and the strengthening of our own institutions which are dependent upon this effectiveness. That is why the fascist-minded in our country, who would limit and destroy our democracy, hate the Soviet Union and fear our growing reliance upon her friendship.

The essence of an enduring relationship is the scrupulous discharge of mutual obligations and engagements. For us to meet our fair share in the common military struggle—to open the Western Front in time—is to guarantee not only the swiftest possible victory, but the basis for a lasting and durable friendship of tremendous value to both of us, a stabilizing and constructive influence which will redound to the profit of the entire world.

Lewis Merrill.
President, United Office and Professional Workers of America

To New Masses: 1. We are both fighting Germany and will keep it up until Hitler is licked.

2. I see no obstacles to continued friendly relations.

3. Military decisions made will be understood in both Washington and Moscow.

4. Continue traditional friendly relations with Finland.

Arthur Capper.
US Senator from Kansas

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RETREAT UNDER COVER

An account of Joseph Freeman's spiritual peregrinations in the realm of Eternal Truth and what he brought back to the world of living men.

NEVER CALL RETREAT, *by Joseph Freeman. Farrar & Rinehart. $3.*

IN HIS preface to *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism,* Lenin comments on the "sad notoriety" gained by writers who depart from the basic views of Marxism but are either afraid or unable to settle accounts openly, resolutely, and explicitly with the beliefs they have abandoned. They embrace mysticism, but "when it comes to an explicit definition of their attitude toward Marx and Engels, all their courage and all their respect for their own convictions at once disappear." In deed they renounce historical materialism; in word they resort to endless subterfuges, attempts to evade the essence of the question, "to cover their retreat."

This covering of retreat under the swaggering slogan of *Never Call Retreat* is crudely illustrated by Joseph Freeman's novel, which has also won a kind of sad notoriety. The more feverishly the book exalts courage in rhetoric, the more pathetically does it reveal a lack of courage in conviction. It is desperately trying to say something; it is just as desperately trying to avoid open, resolute, and explicit speech. It strives to buttress the author's quotation from St. Gregory that "We have become all things to all men."

With repetitious insistence, Freeman disavows any serious responsibility. He informs us in a prefatory note that "the author regrets" any resemblance between "All characters, places, situations, institutions, movements, causes, countries, governments, creeds, ideas, conversations, books, writers, and historical references" and "anything in the real world, past, present, or future." The author wishes he could have used "algebraic symbols," some kind of "literary mathematic." "I talk of dreams," he quotes from Romeo and Juliet, "Which are the children of an idle brain, Begot of nothing but vain fantasy."

The fictional device is equally evasive. The story is told "in strictest confidence" by a neurotic patient, Paul Schuman, to the psychiatrist K. D. Foster, who in turn submits the bulky manuscript to the publisher Russell Hague. The patient is a very learned man, a refugee who was once professor of the History of Western Civilization at Vienna. Paul had asked Dr. Foster:

"Shall I talk about my illness, or may I talk about the world in general, too?"

"Talk about anything that occurs to you."

"You mean I just let my thoughts wander all over the place, so to speak?"

"Yes, all over the place—but only so to speak."

"Instead of A Thousand and One Arabian Nights, a Thousand and One Freudian Hours," he said smiling.

"Not that long, I hope. . . ." Talk freely, the psychiatrist tells Paul, "Say whatever comes into your mind, however irrational it may seem." At times Paul takes this encouragement quite literally.

BUT the psychiatric device itself is dropped as soon as it has been elaborately concocted. Indeed, to take the device seriously, even on its own terms, would be unfriendly to the author; it would be to reduce his novel at once to a melancholy absurdity. For instance, Paul Schuman immoderately recalls, almost with footnotes, long passages of books he had read twenty years ago; it is less easy to picture him in Dr. Foster's office at 86-B Central Park West than in the South Reading Room of the Public Library further downtown. On one page he picks from a "row of books" a volume on the History of Western Ideas and quotes from Abelard; on another, he pulls *The Republic* of Plato "out of the bookcase" and quotes; on another, "I took Milton's prose out of the bookcase," quote; on another, picking up a book which lay face downward on the desk, "Nobody has put it better than St. Augustine," quote; "Then I took down *Lives of the Fathers,*" quote; in the Paris hotel bedroom Babette insisted that I share Condorcet with her, "I had no choice," quote, quote; and so on, et cetera, *und so weiter, kai ta loipa,* and whatever it is in the Sanskrit, from which the author also quotes. These, clearly, are not clinical recollections but notes on cards lumberingly transmogrified into fiction.

Stanley DeGraff

Heavily wrapped in psychiatric blankets, amply armed with alibis for indulging in a Thousand and One Freudian hours, the author is emboldened to intervene in the narrative, first peeping behind his characters, then ordering them around like an unreasonable tyrant, and finally blotting them out altogether with his own impatient ego. This process irresistibly recalls an essay by Freeman before his St. Eusebius period. In that essay Freeman ridiculed an author who disclaimed responsibility for his "imaginary" characters when the author had so obviously editorialized, had so ineptly mingled the words of narrator and character that it was utterly impossible to dissociate the two. "Under the corrupt standards of current bourgeois esthetics," wrote Freeman in 1935, "the 'creative' artist may slander workers, Negroes, Jews, anyone he likes; he may give way to his most reactionary impulses, yet not be called to account as he would be if he spoke directly."

Even under such corrupt standards it is hard to see how the book earns the protective coloration of "creative" art. For esthetically the novel is a monstrous melange; the author has tried to squeeze within the bulging covers of a tedious and somehow recognizable novel a number of essay fragments, with quotations, on the History of Western Ideas, Paul Schuman's university thesis on Condorcet, three visions of Eusebius, a review of Picasso's Guernica murals, irrelevant descriptions of childbirth and lugubrious reflections on the "tragic guilt" of mankind, bitter soul-searchings and tireless self-justifications, odes on intimations of immortality, character equivalents of the literary mathematic, analysis of the nature of poetry and the rise of fascism, a country in the East called There

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(it is conducting "The Great Experiment" and it has, of course, a gallant army) and a country called Here (it has a concentration camp where the main action takes place) and sundry encyclopedic matters whose accidental-on-purpose resemblance to reality is regrettable: thoughts, in short, "wandering all over the place, so to speak." Malcolm Cowley, who rather liked the novel, estimates that it is too long by 400 pages, 200,000 words, and suggests a bit brutally that there is a paper shortage.

Cowley likes the novel because "Freeman turns the tables on his former comrades by subjecting Communism to religious analysis." It appears, then, that all the time Paul Schuman was ostensibly being subjected to "psychoanalysis" by Dr. Foster, Communism was being subjected to "religious analysis" by Dr. Freeman. Stripped of its evasive mystifications, stripped of a florid rhetoric which all but rebukes itself for redundancy, what is this psycho-religious analysis getting at? What goes on behind the ten-foot hedge?

The basic idea of the book is the inevitable betrayal of the "original ideals" of a social movement by those whom this movement has "brought to power." The novel is dominated by this image of the revolution turning against itself. First there is Paul Schuman's exhausting thesis on Condorcet: the French Revolution killed the philosopher who devoted himself to its achievement. Then there are the three visions of Eusebius: he clung to the selfless truths of the early Church only to be martyred by the power-intoxicated Polyclitus. The institution supersedes the spirit; the hierarchy demands blind obedience; the men of action denounce the poets. This process becomes an "eternal truth." It is not examined in terms of actual historical relationships; it is repeated, like an incantation, in terms of mystical prophecy.

The only possible solution to this eternal conflict between "love, justice, poetry" and "power, authority, action" is forgiveness, atonement, cleansing of mankind's soul through love. Eusebius, excommunicated for his heresies, exclaims: "Heavenly Father! Forgive my sins: forgive those who have condemned me unjustly: fill their hearts and mine with wisdom, justice, and love . . . and in the desert where I shall now dwell as an anchorite, do not abandon me, O God! but let me love Thee and mankind with perfect love! Amen. . . ."

IN MORE secular terms, this image is repeated in the concentration camp. Hans Bayer is the party official (Polyclitus); Kurt Herzfeld is the party poet (Eusebius). The reviewers, shattering the deepest secrets of the literary mathematic, have uniformly described these men as Communists. It is possible neither to respect nor to believe in either of these characters. Hans is the reduction to absurdity of "pure action." He is a heartless, unimaginative bureaucrat who thinks Kurt is useful at times, "but he's a poet." Kurt on the other hand is the selfless poet who sacrifices himself on the party altar: he rushes to tear up his lovely poems at a nod from the imperious Hans, and then he cries passionate apologies to his "dead poems" killed by the party—in short from one extreme of imbecility to another extreme of imbecility; he wants to be either a doormat or the only true voice of the revolution. In the end he whines: "Very well; in politics I'll follow you to the end, and I'll stay out, and I'll crawl on hands and knees to my dead poems and pray contritely for their resurrection and the life." Whereupon Hans calls Kurt a renegade, as Polyclitus calls Eusebius a heretic. (Actually, if this "man-of-action" were not himself an ass, it would more appropriately have occurred to him to call the "man-of-spirit" an ass.) And finally, Freeman derives from the concentration camp another melancholy "eternal truth" revealed to him in italics: "*the hatred of the victims for each other.*" By hair-raising contrast to Anna Seghers' *The Seventh Cross*, Freeman gives us bickering, moral poison, endless conversations with the philosophical Nazi jailer, the "tragic guilt" of mankind.

To anyone acquainted with the recent work of Ignazio Silone, Arthur Koestler, or John Dos Passos, these images will have a familiar ring. They are the stock fictional images that in critical terms may be found in Edmund Wilson, in poetical terms in W. H. Auden, in journalistic terms in Eugene Lyons and Louis Fischer. Removed from the realm of abstraction and placed in the real world today, where Freeman is obviously obsessed with them, they are echoes of Trotsky's "Thermidor" image: "the revolution betrayed." To be sure, Freeman hints in his curiously arithmetical way that he is all "for" the country called There; but this, to use an old and still valid esthetic distinction of his, is the mask and not the image.

Surely, Freeman would not have us believe that a tiny group of anti-fascists in a concentration camp represents the threat of "power." Surely he cannot be saying that the small Communist Party of the United States is so spoiled by its vast state authority that it is turning its back on Condorcet-Eusebius. No, despite its vaguely camouflaged remarks about There, the pervasive idea of the novel, with its phony antitheses and whining air of self-righteousness, repeats the standard pattern of propaganda against "socialist totalitarianism." Its religious symbolism is precisely that employed in the latest novels of Silone (in which an ex-Marxist assumes the role of an early Christian martyr and in the midst of fascism preaches humble submissiveness); of Koestler ("the everlasting conflict between the political universe and the moral universe"); of Mark Aldanov ("Marxism had gone from the catacombs to the Inquisition.") These resemblances are not coincidental; they are the accumulating symptoms of a disease.

THIS antithesis between action and idea, practice and theory, politics and poetry—how many times in the past did Freeman proclaim that only through Marxism is it creatively resolved, and how many young writers like myself did he once help persuade of this truth which remains the basic truth of Marxism. And now he says in effect: Citizens, I lied. Gorky was a party hack, Barbusse went crawling to his dead poems, Ralph Fox and Christopher Caudwell took orders, John Reed was a doormat. Petrov at Sevastopol, Kubayashi in Japan, Shelley Wang in China, and Arnold Reid—a co-editor with Freeman of NEW MASSES—in Spain. And this their shining monument. It would have been more decent to shout not in algebraic symbols but in plain prose: Citizens, it is *now* I am lying.

But instead Freeman embraces his shadow and proclaims it to the universe. He prescribes love, love, the magical essence that will win over tyranny. Sholokhov writes "The Science of Hate": hate for the enemies of his country, of human decency, of the working class; unceasing hate for the enemies of everything we truly love. But Freeman writes "The Mythology of Love": love so broad-bosomed that it can accommodate the embraces of Allen Tate, who foresees good anti-fascist pro-Nazi poetry; of Stephen Spender, who "experienced no heroism in Spain"; of Auden, who has also subjected the working class to the analysis of metaphysical morality; of Horace Gregory, who amuses the New York *Times* with vicious claptrap; and a dozen others whom our author quotes with promiscuous enthusiasm.

"But love!" Engels once wrote, "yes, with Feuerbach, love is everywhere and at all times the wonder-working god who should help to surmount all difficulties of practical life. . . . He clings hard to nature and humanity; but nature and humanity remain always mere words with him. He is incapable of telling us anything definite either about real nature or real men. But from the abstract men of Feuerbach one arrives at real living men only when one considers them as participants in history."

And from Freeman's abstract caricatures one arrives at real living men only when one considers them as participants in history: in the Soviet Union, in China, in Britain, in the very hell of fascist Germany itself, where the real living Communists are epically refuting Freeman's frenzied separation of action and truth, politics and poetry. The author cried *Never Call Retreat*, while the press hailed his headlong flight from everything he said he believed for twenty years. Freeman had opened his book with a quotation from St. Augustine: "All this is true in a way precisely because it is false in a way." The reviewers who

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have uncommonly sensitive noses for this sort of thing, had at once detected what it is that is true precisely because it is not true. Literary mathematic or no literary mathematic, here was another anti-Red Testament by an ex-Red; and the reviewers had the courage of the author's convictions. The vast "philosophical drama," it was soon clear enough, was an awkwardly disguised second installment of autobiography; in it an aggrieved ego could comfort itself with "eternal truth" while hypocritically indulging in what, before his resurrection and the life, Freeman would have recognized as the wanton desertion of principle, rewarded by the flattery of reaction.

Rich Autobiography

BOUND FOR GLORY, *by Woody Guthrie. Dutton. $3.*

WOODY GUTHRIE has sung up and down the country, from honky-tonks to Madison Square Garden. He has become a familiar figure in the union halls and on the street corners of America's leading industrial centers, creating ditties and ballads out of the workers' problems and aspirations. Riding home from a meeting, I have heard him make up songs on the spot, describing the meeting, the speeches, the people present. He is also a born storyteller, and many of his friends first came to know him through his richly humorous comments on big city life, published in the *Daily Worker*. Many are familiar with his songs through Dust Bowl Ballads and as one of the Almanac Singers.

Bound For Glory is technically a biography of Woody Guthrie's youth, but it is much more. In a larger sense it presents a sprawling canvas of itinerant America, of the thousands of jettisoned youth of the depression era, of the work-hungry victims of the dust bowl decade.

Woody was born in Okemah, Okla., on the verge of the oil booms. His father was a land speculator who carried his office in his hat. He prospered for a while and the family enjoyed a relative opulence. But their fine house burned down, and this misfortune was the beginning of the downward trail. Opportunities diminished, and his father deteriorated as a money-maker. When the oil craze hit the state, the Guthries were living on the fringes of the city, in an old shack. Woody's mother cracked under the burden. Crude living facilities were responsible for the death of a sister, who perished of first degree burns. His father got a job in Texas, and Woody was on his own. He sold newspapers, polished spittoons, slept in the open, in unprotected shacks; he was rained upon, he froze or sweltered with the seasons. The anguish and heartbreak of his mother's life, her fight to hold onto her sanity, his father's groping and awkward attempts to be a good hus-

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band and his sense of failure, are revealed in some of the most poignant scenes of the book. These things permeated his life with sadness and misery, but they also gave him a precocious understanding of people, a sympathy and tolerance and humanity that are part of all his songs and stories.

When the boom died, and the hard-working roistering mulers and lead men of the oil fields departed for the next boom-town, Woody's own meager pickings evaporated and he took it on the lam. His subsequent experiences provide the richest sections of *Bound for Glory*. He began rubbing elbows with the wandering and homeless of America. His companions became "stemwinders, panhandlers, itinerant workers, stew bums, spittoon tuners, bindle-stiffs, reefer riders," and dozens of others. He himself, hanging on to his guitar wherever he went, singing songs to the derelict or the wandering worker, was called a joint hopper, a tip canary, a kitty box man.

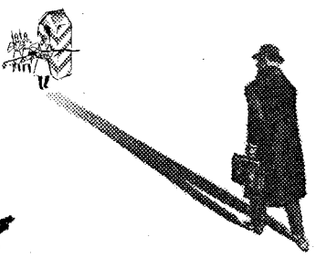
Chased by yard bulls and railroad dicks, forced to move on by the police of the towns through which he passed, there was little rest or ease for him or his fellows. But always he was rescued by the little people, the railroad workers, the dwellers on the "wrong side of the track," and he never forgot it. Woody always identified himself with the people, the factory workers, the fruit pickers, the dispossessed farmers. He understood their needs and made up songs about how to solve their problems. He sang of "organizin', of gettin' together," of workers' rights.

His riding companions, too, are different from those portrayed in the old "color" stories of hobo life. They are conscious of the war, hate the Nazis. Within the framework of this ambulatory existence, he meets people who are aware of social evils. One rider objected to the presence of a Negro. The "Jim Crow" man was thrown out of the car, and the leader in that action speaks up: "I got sick and tired of that stuff [Jim Crow] when I was growing up. . . . I was born in a country that's got all kind of diseases and this skin trouble was the worst one of the lot . . . it caused a lot of trouble to people, all on account of just some silly crazy notion. Like you can help what color you are. Goddamit all. Goddamit all."

The prose is a rapid current, bearing the story past every feature of the native cultural landscape. Sometimes you wish the pace would let up just a little, long enough to permit you to recognize the features of an oil worker or his next door neighbor. But the rich language, the salty dialogue, the fine imagery, more than make up for any lesser defects. The author writes as he sings, intoning the talk and rhythm of the common man.

Bound For Glory is a powerful and memorable cross-section of America.

JOSEPH FOSTER.



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BUT THE PEOPLE LIVE

Joy Davidman sees in "Hangmen Also Die" America's finest war film. Samuel Sillen discusses the thought-provoking stage hit "Tomorrow the World."

You do not see them very often. Once in five years, perhaps, a film appears which so perfectly realizes its subject and its medium that criticism is struck dumb. *The Informer, Grapes of Wrath,* and now *Hangmen Also Die* are so unquestionably great that the critic's task becomes humble study of their methods, that others may learn to do likewise. The new Fritz Lang film, a story of the Czech underground movement after the killing of Heydrich, may well be America's finest artistic comment on the war.

After a savage introductory account of the betrayal of Czechoslovakia, Heydrich makes his appearance on the screen. He is a curious but characteristic mixture of effeminacy and sadism. You never see him again. The next thing you know, a man is running away; and you discover that this man has killed Heydrich. Hunted by the Nazis, his planned escape cut off, he takes refuge with a strange girl while the Gestapo is tearing Prague apart to find him, and his colleagues in the underground wait desperately. The Nazis adopt two methods in their man-hunt; a mass attack, imprisonment, and slaughter, and the individual pursuit directed by a Gestapo detective, who has the aid of a traitor in the underground movement. Czech hostages are executed daily, because the killer of Heydrich remains free. But his freedom becomes a symbol of Czech victory; the entire people conspires to aid him, thus making his act an integral part of their subterranean war. Hundreds die; but the Czech people's solidarity is unbroken, and the Nazis have to own themselves beaten. Meanwhile the Gestapo man solves the case, only to be destroyed; and the quisling who aided him is neatly saddled with responsibility for Heydrich's murder by the underground, to be killed in consequence by his Nazi masters.

This is necessarily a violent story, full of excursions and alarums. Many of its incidents we have seen used in weaker films, like the fugitive's taking refuge with a girl and the Gestapo man-hunt. And some critics have called *Hangmen Also Die* a melodrama, forgetting that melodrama is not pictured violence per se but the intrusion of *unmotivated, accidental* violence into situations lacking intrinsic conflict. Had the killer and the girl fallen in love, for instance, that would be a melodramatic addition to the story in the best Hollywood manner. But she remains faithful to the lover she has already, and her relationship to the fugitive killer is entirely based on the film's main conflict. *Hangmen Also Die* is as intrinsically dramatic as the war itself; and, as in war and the rest of the universe, nothing happens in this film without sufficient cause.

All war films have the same problem—how to tell the story of mankind in crisis, in terms of a few individuals. Even a war documentary, to be effective, must shift at times from the mass record of troop movements to the personal lives of soldiers. And the fiction film is of course compelled to give most of its attention to individuals, equipping them with a mass background and making their story contain, implicitly, the story of all people in this war. The common and obvious failure of the cops-and-robbers school of war films is their failure to supply the mass background, to bring their individuals into any sort of relation to the surrounding world. Their characters might as well be kissing and killing on Mars.

A more intellectual type of failure is the use of false symbolism, as in *The Moon Is Down,* where an otherwise valid film was weakened by the presentation of men as incarnate ideas. For you can make one man the symbol of ten thousand or ten million men—indeed every true artist does; but you cannot artistically make him the symbol of an idea. Doing this, in creative writing, destroys both the man and the idea—the one through depersonalization, the other through over-simplification.

Obviously, nevertheless, ideas can be conveyed on the screen; not abstractly, but through their legitimate effect on behavior. The man is not the mouthpiece of the idea, or its symbol; rather does the idea itself symbolize the economic and social forces working through the man. *Hangmen Also Die* goes behind the abstract concepts of freedom and tyranny to show concrete forces in operation, and it is probably the first of our historical films to fuse successfully the individual, the mass, and the social struggle. Here the mass is, correctly, the logical extension of the individual—not, romantically, the individual's antagonistic and contrasting background; not, idealistically, a crude physical approximation of Man, of which the individual is the bodiless archetype somewhere in the Platonic heaven. In other words, *Hangmen Also Die* is historic realism replacing the mystical pseudo-platonic idealism which flaws such films as *The Moon Is Down.* Though it may seem pompous to analyze films in philosophic language, yet it is necessary; for only by analysis of their underlying philosophy can we see films as a more integral part of our world than, say, some stray meteorite dropped on us by a cosmic accident.

Thus the killer of Heydrich does not represent Heroic Resistance or the Four Freedoms; he represents himself, a passionate, courageous, hunted, and suffering man. And therefore he comes to represent all men who fight for the people. The film's Gestapo man does not, like most film Gestapos, represent villainy, smooth or brutal. Instead he is one hard-working, dogged little detective, corrupt and insensitive in some ways, but thoroughly conscientious about his job; to himself he would seem a respectable, *gemuetlich* burgher who likes his beer and a pretty girl. And thus he represents all those who acquiesce passively in fascism, all those who hope to safeguard their private lives by blind obedience. Our own race-haters find it cheap and easy to label such Germans inhuman monsters; actually the Gestapo burghers and their

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kind are horrible precisely because they *are* human, because they respond to social pressures like everyone else, because their crime is the human and suicidal one of taking the line of least resistance.

Marrying theory to practice, *Hangmen Also Die* expresses its philosophy through creative imagination and consummate screen technique. The script, written by John Wexley and Bertolt Brecht, is so constructed that individuals are always seen in close relation to the people; and Fritz Lang's direction builds upon this script so expertly that the film might be the work of a single vast brain. Heydrich's killer is, at first, one man alone; then one man in relation to the casual people who help him; then one man with casual helpers in a group of underground leaders; then part of an underground group around which a vast movement is gathered; and finally a man at the heart of a movement which is at the heart of a people. The film broadens as a theme broadens in the orchestra from the first lone flutes to the final tremendous unison; and meanwhile other lines are being developed—the story of the girl and her family, the story of the quisling; most significantly the story of a Gestapo man who, partly through writing and partly through miraculous acting, dominates the film until the Czech people destroy him. Through all this is woven the mass record of the Czech people, as crowds in a restaurant, as a string of witnesses lying to the Nazis, as a barrack room of hostages who accept death as their contribution to the struggle. Most film treatment of masses of people is merely spectacular—showy battle-pieces and the like—but the mass scenes in *Hangmen Also Die* advance the story instead of interrupting it.

Orchestrating such a film is a tremendous task; and it forms a perfectly coordinated narrative not merely because Fritz Lang happens to be a film genius but also because this film's makers had a perfectly coordinated political understanding of their subject. This understanding reveals itself in many details, as well as in the picture's basic structure. For instance, the Czech traitor tries to use the Red scare against the underground movement; the Czech general (based on Serovy) who begins by collaborating with Heydrich ends as one of the few hostages who consents to make a pro-Nazi radio appeal, and is horrified when they shoot him anyhow. The quisling is a prosperous brewer, and he maintains his pleasant relations with the Gestapo not only by gathering information but also by signing checks. Perhaps most impressive of all is the underground's revenge on the quisling. From all over Prague witnesses come, witnesses who do not know each other, witnesses who are apparently very ordinary, law-abiding citizens with no revolutionary heroism, boarding-house keepers, taxi drivers, waiters in restaurants, even the quisling's own butler. All fill in the details of his murder of Heydrich—the murder he never committed. And, without a word said on the subject, one realizes that this movement is the whole people.

All these magnificently imagined people are magnificently acted. Brian Donlevy is perfectly in key as the doctor who turns killer to rid the world of Heydrich; Gene Lockhart does one of his finest jobs as the quisling Czacha; minor parts do not mean minor performance—Lionel Stander, in one brief scene, is particularly memorable. The film's acting sensation, however, is Alexander Granach's portrayal of Inspector Gruber of the Gestapo. Granach will be remembered from the Soviet film *Gypsies* and the Hollywood *Joan of Paris*, where he made a mute part the dominant one. Here he has the opportunity he has long deserved, and establishes himself as one of the world's great actors. His terrifying and pitiable, unprincipled and yet conscientious detective is the truest presentation of a man of evil will the screen has had. And in the Czech workers' support of the Soviet Union, the unmasking of appeasers and quislings, the uniting of an entire people against fascism, *Hangmen Also Die* is the screen voice of all men of good will.

JOY DAVIDMAN.

Know Your Enemies

BEAT the Taber, Sound the Drum—Representative Taber of New York pounded his chest and howled at a private showing in his office of OWI propaganda . . . charged a cartoon biography of Roosevelt was fourth-term promotion . . . seemed to want "President of the United States" to be an unmentionable subject like panties in the Victorian era . . . showed "The Price of Victory," movie short based on a Wallace speech, and called it Communistic . . . played a radio transcript of an appeal for war production and called it drivel.

This circus, which took place last March 13, was preliminary to the Taber-led congressional attack on OWI, designed to prevent mention of fascism as an enemy.

Seversky's "Victory Through Air Power" is now being filmed as a comic cartoon, which is just about where it belongs. But apparently the Disney studios take seriously the idea that you can conquer a great military power without smashing its armies or setting foot on its soil. . . . Showers of advance publicity boasting the film take MacArthur's name in vain as a supporter of Seversky, because he asked for more planes in the Pacific. . . .

Latest news on the film "Life of Rickenbacker," which is being strenuously attacked by the CIO, is that it may be a build-up for Rickenbacker as Republican Vice-Presidential candidate. . . . Also Alva Johnson, reactionary Satevepost labor-baiter, wings his way westward to work on the film's script. . . . Birds of a feather.

Tweedledum and Tweedledee Note: The "New Leader" (Social-Democratic) and Chicago "Tribune" (Hoover-Republican and worse) join merrily in attacking Warners' film "Mission to Moscow," on the ground it tells the truth about Russia. . . . Everyone knows the "Tribune" has done everything to help Hitler except send its publisher to the Fuehrer's Eastern Front, and maybe the boys in the Trib office would like to. . . . Warners says opposition from such sources is helping the picture no end. . . . "Mission to Moscow" is being sold singly, on its merits, in conformance with Warner-led new film industry policy of letting each picture stand alone.

'Tomorrow the World'

A satisfying addition to war literature.

IN "TOMORROW THE WORLD," James Gow and Arnaud d'Usseau have written the most thought-provoking play of the war period. They have challenged the audience to do some hard thinking about fascism; and not only challenged but dramatically compelled a sober definition of attitudes toward the war and postwar reconstruction. That theater-goers are prepared for such a mature, searching, tough-minded analysis of basic issues in profoundly human terms is being enthusiastically demonstrated at the Ethel Barrymore Theater. Staged by Elliott Nugent and featuring Ralph Bellamy and Shirley Booth, the play is a highly significant and satisfying addition to the literature of this war.

It projects the hideous image of fascism in a new and altogether effective way. The scene is not a battlefront or an occupied country but a quiet Midwestern university town. Both the power and the degeneration of the Nazis are revealed through a twelve-year old boy, Emil Bruckner, who has been brought to this country by his uncle, Prof. Michael Frame. Emil's father was an anti-fascist philosopher whom the Gestapo tortured to death; but Emil, product of the Nazi system, is a phonograph record repeating the lies of *Mein Kampf* with brazen and horrifying assurance. The Nazis have done their job well. Emil is a crafty little animal whose goal in life is to die for the fuehrer; he struts across the

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stage with the cockiness of his "superior race"; he is a spy and a consummate liar; he rips up his father's portrait on the wall; he comes close to killing his cousin Patricia; and above all he tries to divide and conquer the household in an effort to break up the marriage between Frame and the Jewish schoolteacher Leona Richards. He is, in short, the thoroughly hateful image of his Nazi downbringing.

But the authors are concerned with more than the corrupting influence of fascism on the child's personality. Having powerfully depicted this dimension of the play, they pose an overwhelming and inescapable question: What are we going to do with that boy? Win him over with kindness? Kill him? Put him behind bars for life? There are presumably 12,000,000 others very much like him in Germany, and the answer to this question is scarcely academic.

A dramatic conflict of interpretation develops in the play, with Michael Frame and Leona Richards shifting sides before the conflict is resolved. Frame, at first, sticks to an old-fashioned liberal faith that friendliness, patience, a new suit of clothes will do the trick; he has always faced difficulties by "turning on the charm," as Leona says. Leona is more realistic; the comfortable cliches of progressive education will not work with this child; he needs to be shown, in the only language he has been taught to understand, that his superior race is not so superior after all; he needs to be thrashed; it is necessary to cut deeply into the thick surface of his "social heredity."

Michael's liberal tolerance leads to near disaster for the household, and he swings over, by revulsion, to a position that resembles the extermination theory of postwar treatment of the German people. Leona, maintaining her tough realism, defends the possibility of reforming the boy once she has seen that he can be shaken psychologically. At the conclusion of the intensely concentrated action, both Michael and Leona—and the audience which has struggled with them—are convinced that the Nazis have been unable to destroy completely the human potentialities of the boy. They have thought through an attitude which has nothing in common either with appeasement or with national extermination (which is another species of defeatism).

Every character in this scrupulously written, tightly woven play has an organic relation to the main theme. Michael Frame's child, Patricia, is the buoyant, fair-minded, generous American schoolgirl, a convincing opposite of the Nazi schoolboy whom she helps to shake up. The German-born maid, Frieda, loathes the Nazis, and particularly Fred Miller, a Bund leader masking as the university janitor. Most interesting of the secondary characters is Michael Frame's sister Jessie, whose frustrations and prejudices the Nazi boy cleverly manipulates, turning her into an ally against Leona.

A genuine clarity of social understanding and a sure craftsmanship have turned these complex materials into an accomplished and deeply moving play. Only in one major respect does the play seem faulty, and this shortcoming is related to a virtue. The German boy tends to overshadow the human relationships which his presence on the stage determines. He is powerfully drawn, and the audience is so fascinated by his monstrous reflection of Nazi ideology that it pays insufficient attention to his function as a catalytic agent in the situation. Most of the reviewers, for instance, had eyes only for the boy; and while this is in part due to a constitutional myopia, it is in part due to the construction of the play. The boy is seen too often with individual characters in the Frame household; even when Michael and Leona are on the stage together, he tends to be interrogated in turn by one while the other withdraws from action. The authors have had to show Emil alone with Frieda or with Jessie, with Patricia or with Fred Miller in order to delineate his divide and conquer technique. But the relations among all the characters—which is the real essence of the play—needed to be more sharply portrayed in scenes which organically involve them all in the action. Leona, for example, is the focal intelligence of the drama, but too often she is being moved away from the center; her part requires elaboration, more consistent involvement than she now has.

At the same time, I don't want to exaggerate this limitation. For the play, despite the impression some reviewers have given, succeeds in being not only "about a Nazi boy" but also "about plain Americans" confronted with Nazism in their own home. It challenges complacency. It shows that the collision of human attitudes and social beliefs is as surely a part of this war as the collision of armored troops. Like *The Patriots,* though in an essentially more subtle way, it demonstrates that the deepest drama of our time is a drama of ideas, of beliefs about the meaning of man's worth.

Elliott Nugent has directed the play with great restraint, properly emphasizing the gravity and dignity of the theme. Ralph Bellamy as the college professor gives an excellent performance for which few of his movie roles had given scope; he is informal, good-natured, yet capable of deep feeling. At critical moments in the play, Shirley Booth as Leona Richards evokes respect for her warm sympathy and firm intelligence; at other moments I was conscious of a certain stiffness arising possibly from an inadequate definition of her role. Young Skippy Homeier as juvenile stormtrooper earns the enthusiastic praise he has received; he has sensationally mastered an arduous part that requires him to speak with an accent; he is thoroughly convinc-

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ing. Nancy Nugent, who alternates with Joyce Van Patten as Patricia Frame, and Edit Angold as Frieda were animated; but Dorothy Sands as Jessie does not register all the possibilities of her interesting role.

Tomorrow the World is here to stay for a long time. NEW MASSES readers will find it one of the most rewarding plays of the season.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

PROGRESSIVE'S ALMANAC

April

29—Workers School. Registration all week. Special program of courses for the Youth. 35 East 12th Street.

30—New Masses. "Can We Win the War NOW?" Maj. George Fielding Eliot, Capt. Sergei Kournakoff, Johannes Steel, Henry C. Cassidy. Mecca Theater, 133 W. 55th St., N. Y. C.

30—N. Y. Newspaper Guild. Annual Dance. Hotel Astor.

May

1—N. Y. State Committee, Communist Party. Victory Ball Reception to new members. Entertainment. Royal Windsor ball room.

2—United May Day Committee. Labor for Victory May Day Celebration. Genevieve Tabouis and others. Yankee Stadium, 2 P.M.

9—Evening of Chamber Music. Benefit "New Masses." 55 West 57th Street, Studio 8D.

11 — Ambijan Committee. Monthly Forum. Dr. Bernhard J. Stern. Motion Picture on Biro-Bidjan. Hotel Commodore. Public invited.

14—Richard Boyer on "Inside Germany." Entertainment by Fred Keating. Auspices Anti-Fascist Press Group. 1349 Lexington Ave., Apt. 5B.

22—Peter V. Cacchione Association. Second Annual Dance. Al Moss, Laura Duncan and others. St. George Hotel, Brooklyn, N. Y.

23—IWO March to Freedom Pageant. Madison Square Garden. 7:30 P.M.

26—Jewish Writers and Artists in America. Unity Dinner. Sholem Asch, chairman. Hotel Commodore.

June

7—Negro Labor Victory Committee. Negro Freedom Rally. Madison Square Garden.

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